

JOHN CALVIN

THE MAN AND HIS WORK



BY THE
REV C. H. IRWIN, M.A.

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JOHN CALVIN

THE MAN AND HIS WORK

BY THE
REV. C. H. IRWIN, M.A.

WITH PORTRAITS
AND NUMEROUS OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

SECOND EDITION

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JOHN CALVIN

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD INTO WHICH CALVIN CAME

THE close of the fifteenth century saw the opening of many new pages in the world's progress. The world itself had become suddenly enlarged. In 1492 the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus not only added new territory to Spain, but opened men's minds to new visions of adventure and discovery. The year 1497 was marked not only by the Cabots' further discoveries in North America, but by Vasco da Gama's voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, which brought Europe into touch with the romance and the wealth of India.

Printing, invented by Gutenberg in Germany, was introduced into England in 1476 by William Caxton, and established also by Louis XI. at the Sorbonne in Paris. This, coming after the taking of Constantinople and the fall of the Greek Empire,

New
countries
discovered

Invention
of Print-
ing

helped to spread throughout Europe the literature of Greece and Rome, and contributed to the great awakening of European thought.

Rise of the
Western
nations

Power, too, was being transferred from the Eastern nations of Europe to those of the West. Venice, Florence, Genoa saw their vast influence gradually passing away. Spain, France, and England had become mighty nations. For the time being, at least, the republican states, north as well as south, gave way before the monarchical.

Strength
and weak-
ness of the
Papacy

One power alone seemed to stand unshaken amid surrounding changes. High above all monarchies, directing and controlling all, stood 'the Chair of St Peter.' But already it had manifested symptoms of serious weakness. In the beginning of the fourteenth century the strange spectacle was witnessed of two rival Popes, one having his residence at Avignon, the other at Rome, while a little later there were three. In 1439 a council of the Church held at Florence annulled the acts of the council which had met at Basel two years before, and anathematized the fathers who had taken part in it. When the century closed, the Papal chair was occupied by Alexander

VI., better known as Roderic Borgia, whose infamous life brought the Papacy to its lowest depth of shame.

Against the corruptions of the Church many protests had already been made. The crusade for a purer faith and for a simpler life, begun by Wycliffe in England, was continued on the Continent chiefly by two men, John Hus and Giralomo Savonarola. Hus, besides being a professor in the University of Prague, was also a preacher in one of the churches of that city. He denounced the vices of many of the clergy, and recommended the teachings of Wycliffe. In 1415 he was summoned to the Council of Constance. Relying upon the safe-conduct given him by the Emperor Sigismund, he appeared at Constance to defend his teaching. But the safe-conduct was violated. He was cast into prison, and was subsequently condemned as a heretic and put to death by burning, his ashes being thrown into the Rhine.

Savonarola, a Dominican monk, became the most eloquent preacher of Florence. To him belongs that rare distinction, a distinction shared also by Calvin, of producing by his preaching a complete

Protest
against
corrup-
tions in
the
Church

John Hus

savon-
arola

reformation of morals in the city which was the scene of his labours. His influence on art and literature has been an abiding one. When Michelangelo was painting in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican his famous picture of 'The Last Judgment,' he derived much of his inspiration from the study of Savonarola's sermons. In *Romola*, one of the first of English novelists has immortalised the preaching of the Florentine monk.

Savonarola met with the same fate as Hus. He, too, was unsparing in his attack on the corruptions of the Church. On May 23, 1498, he was put to the double death of hanging and burning, and his ashes were thrown into the Arno. A slab in the pavement in front of the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence marks the spot where he suffered, and every year on the anniversary of his death the Florentines lay flowers on the slab in homage to his memory. Of him and his relation to the Church of Rome, Potter, a Belgian writer, himself a Roman Catholic, says: *Voilà un moine condamné par l'inquisition comme hérétique, et brûlé par ordre d'un des papes les plus infâmes qui aient occupé la chaire de St Pierre, tacitement canonisé par un autre pape* [*Benedict XIV.*],

*adoré par une sainte [St Catherine de Ricci]
et par un évêque vertueux [Scipio de Ricci] et
vilipendé par d'autres moines (Vie de Scipion
de Ricci, ii. p. 257).*

Thus the protests of reformers like Hus and Savonarola had been apparently quenched in flames. Fire and sword had been everywhere used by the Church of Rome to crush out independent thought and liberty of action. Bohemia, whose people largely sympathised with Hus, had been drenched in blood. In England the followers of Wycliffe suffered, under Henry IV., imprisonment and death.

Early in the sixteenth century, Pope Alexander VI. died. His immediate successor, Pius III., lived less than a month after being raised to the Pontificate, and was followed by Julius II. This Pope was a man of war. He attacked in succession the Venetians and the French. Victorious over the Venetians, he was less successful against Louis XII. of France, who carried the war into Italy. There the French king not only won upon the battle-field, but gained over to his side several of the Roman cardinals. Under their auspices a Council of the Church was held at Pisa

in 1511, which suspended the authority of the Pope and declared in favour of a general reformation of abuses in the Church. Louis published this decree throughout France. All this helped further to weaken the power of the Holy See.

Pope
Leo X.
destroys
the
Gallican
liberties

Soon after this Julius II. died, and was succeeded by Pope Leo X., one of the Medici family. One of his earliest efforts was directed to re-establishing the weakened influence of the Papacy in France. In 1516 he concluded with Francis I. of France a concordat, by which the Pragmatic Sanction was abrogated. This meant the overthrow of one of the main bulwarks of the French Church against the aggression and tyranny of Rome—the famous Gallican liberties. By the Pragmatic Sanction the liberties of the French Church were founded upon the decrees of the Council of Basel (1433-1437), which had been made by Charles VII. part of the law of the state, though the court of Rome had always protested against them. But the new concordat declared the superiority of popes over councils, and restored to the papacy the *annates*, or first year's revenue of vacant benefices. It is to the credit of the Parlia-

ment and the University of Paris that they both protested against this violation of the liberties of the French people, to the great indignation of the king.

Such was the state of things in France when Calvin was a boy. In the year that he was born, Henry VIII. succeeded to the throne of England. When Calvin was seventeen years old, Tyndale's New Testament was first published at Antwerp. He was only eight years old when Luther, then a man of thirty-four, nailed his famous theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenberg.

Calvin's
contem-
poraries



CHAPTER II

CALVIN'S EARLY DAYS

1509

JOHN CALVIN was born July 10, 1509, at Noyon in Picardy, now in the department of Oise. His ancestors, the Cauvins, had been a race of bargemen on the Oise river at Pont l'Evêque, near Noyon. His father came to live at Noyon, and there, in a house part of which is now the Hôtel de France, Calvin was born.

His
parents

His father, Gerard Cauvin, was notary apostolic, procurator-fiscal of the county, clerk of the Church court, and diocesan secretary. He was the counsellor of the clergy and nobility. Admitted as a burgess in 1497, he married Jeanne le Franc, whose father was also a burgess of the town. They were people, therefore, of comfortable circumstances.

Gerard Cauvin was a man of independent and anti-clerical spirit. Thus on August 5, 1524, we find him appearing before the



COURT OF HOUSE AT NOYON, WHERE CALVIN WAS BORN.

chapter and demanding of the canons the reason for an imprisonment which he regarded as illegal.

As a schoolboy, John Calvin showed a ^{His} retentive memory and a keen mind. Beza ^{school-}_{days} tells us that he received his earliest education with the children of the Montmor family, one of the first in the county for its nobility and influence. This family practically adopted Calvin, but his father paid for his maintenance. Calvin afterwards dedicated his first work, the *Commentary on Seneca*, to Abbot Hangest (Montmor) of St Eloi, with whom he had studied. 'Brought up,' he says, 'as a child in your house ; devoted to the same studies as yourself, the first instruction which I received was derived from the life and cultivation of your own very noble family.' This event, says Doumergue, was of great importance in John Calvin's life. God was thus preparing him to play his part worthily in the society of the great, of princes and kings.

In 1521, John Calvin, then at the age of twelve, received a benefice or bursary from the Cathedral chapter.

Evangelical influences

In 1523 he went with the young Montmors to Paris, to finish his studies. There, at the College de la Marche, he came under the influence of one of its 'régents,' Mathurin Cordier. The latter, says Doumergue, 'was not only the first pedagogue of his time, but the founder of modern pedagogy.' He was also a man of thoroughly evangelical spirit. He thought that the teacher should aim at instilling into his scholars the Word of God and the love of Christ. But it was not until about 1528 that Cordier definitely accepted evangelical doctrines.

To Cordier, also, Calvin owed his style. Cordier's great linguistic work was to purify the hybrid French of the time—half-Latin, half-French, and separate French from Latin.

To Cordier, Calvin dedicated his Commentary on 1st Thessalonians (1550), and when he founded his College at Geneva he brought him to be one of its first professors. Cordier died at Geneva at the age of eighty-five, in 1564, four months after the death of Calvin.

College days in Paris

From de la Marche College, John Calvin went to Montaigu College, also in Paris.

There the discipline was severe, the food scanty, and the education old-fashioned. Its filth was indescribable. Vermin abounded, yet good scholars were educated there. It was at Montaigu that both Erasmus and Rabelais were educated.

So far from being an austere and morose youth, as some writers have depicted him in his college days, Lefranc¹ says that 'all that we know of this period of his life shows that he was neither so sad nor so morose as he has been described. Surrounded with sympathetic and attached friends, he knew how to enjoy himself and to smile.' (*La Jeunesse de Calvin*, p. 70, note p. 71.)

Before Calvin's college days, a work of reformation had already begun at Paris, under Le Fèvre (b. 1435). Of him Doumergue says that his numerous and learned publications place him by the side of Reuchlin and Erasmus. Beza says that he 'chased barbarism from the most famous university of the world,' 'and restored in the Uni-

¹ Lefranc was Secretary of the College of France, and a descendant, on the mother's side, of the Calvin family. He wrote *La Jeunesse de Calvin* (1888); *L'histoire du Collège de France* and *Les dernières poésies de Marguerite de Navarre*.

versity of Paris the true logic of Aristotle and the Mathematics, in place of the sophistry which previously reigned there.'

In 1507 Le Fèvre came to Saint-Germain de Près, and there he taught and wrote until 1520.

'The First
Protes-
tant Book'

In 1512 appeared his Latin commentary on the Epistles of St Paul. Doumergue says : ' In one sense, this book may be called the first Protestant book.' In it he enforced the supreme authority of the Word of God. He boldly says (Col. iii. fol. 185 b) : ' Let us not follow the precepts and the dogmas of men, which have not their foundation in the light that has shined from on high.' He also asserts clearly the doctrine of justification by faith. He denies a magical virtue in the sacraments, and says that ' the sensible symbols are the signs of Divine things and ' infusions.' He attacks the celibacy of the priesthood, the Latin liturgy, etc. It is true, he retains invocation of saints and purgatory, but he denies the sacrifice of the mass.

Farel was a disciple of Le Fèvre, and in 1523 (the year Calvin came to Paris) he had founded a secret church in Paris.

In 1516 Le Fèvre published a second edition of his Commentary on St Paul, in which, contrary to the liturgy of the Church, he proved that Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and Mary the woman who was a sinner, were not one and the same person, but three Marys. A great commotion followed. The Sorbonnists, the Franciscans, Carmelites, Dominicans all attacked him.

In this controversy Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, took part. Appeal was made to him by the Bishop of Paris, and he wrote two pamphlets against Le Fèvre and his supporter Clichtove. They replied, and Fisher retorted with two more pamphlets.

Le Fèvre was accused as a heretic before Parliament, but Francis I. intervened to stop the trial. Le Fèvre in 1520-21 withdrew to Meaux.

Le Fèvre was the first translator of the Bible in its entirety into French. In 1523 he published his translation of the New Testament, and in 1528 of the Old Testament. There was a previous translation (1478) by Rely, who became Bishop of Angers in 1491, but it had many abridgments, additions and glosses. Le Fèvre,

Le Fèvre
and the
French
Bible

however acknowledges his indebtedness to it, and used it largely.

In 1525 he fled from Meaux to Strassburg.

That same year the Inquisition was established at Paris by a Papal Bull. One of its first acts was to condemn to the flames the translation of the Bible. In 1526, 'heretics' were burned at Paris and elsewhere in France.

In 1527 John Calvin was presented to the living of St Martin de Martheville (near Vermand, Aisne). But his father, who had meanwhile quarrelled with the Chapter at Noyon, had now other views for him, and wished him to study law. About this time Calvin, too, was changing his own views. The principal person who helped to bring about his conversion to evangelical views was Pierre Robert (named also Olivétan), a second cousin of his own. Olivétan afterwards became a heroic missionary in the Vaudois Alps. He published in 1535 a French translation of the Bible, which is dated from 'The Alps.'

Just when Calvin was leaving Paris (1528) Ignatius Loyola came there as a student,

also at the Montaigu. Calvin was then eighteen, Loyola thirty-six.

From Paris, Calvin went to Orléans, and remained there from the beginning of 1528 to May 1529. There he studied at the University, then a much more enlightened and progressive institution than the University of Paris. He took such a high place in his studies of the law, that they wished to make him a doctor free of charge, but he declined, and went to Bourges.

One of his friendships at Orléans was with François Daniel. It proved to be a life-long friendship. The correspondence between Calvin and Daniel, especially when Calvin pleads with him on behalf of his (Daniel's) son, when there was an estrangement between father and son, shows a great amount of tenderness and playful kindness. Once more a very different picture of the real Calvin from that which his enemies have painted.

At Bourges he continued his legal studies. There his principal friend was Melchior Wolmar, a Swiss, and a Lutheran. Wolmar

helped him in Greek. To him Calvin dedicated his *Commentary on St John's Gospel* (1553).

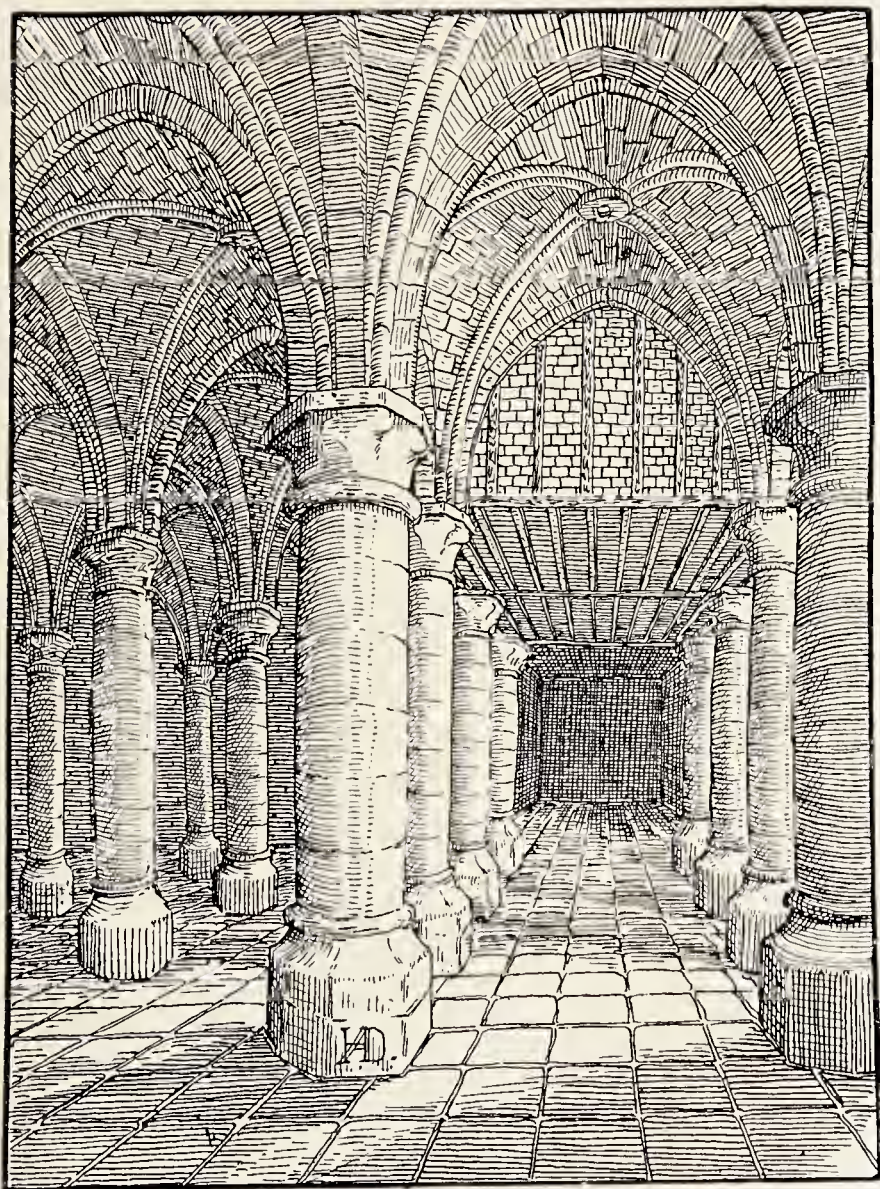
His
father's
death

In 1531 Calvin's father died. This event changed his plans once more, as he had given himself to study of the law in order to please his father. He returned to Paris, to pursue the study of literature.

This was a new and important phase in his varied education. He lived at the College of Fortet, and studied Greek and Hebrew, the former especially under Danès, a most eminent scholar. 'Perhaps,' says Lefranc, 'Calvin sat more than once on the same bench as Ignatius Loyola, his former fellow-student at Montaigu, as Pierre Lefèvre and François Xavier, both of whom, we know on good authority, followed the Greek course at this same period.' Rabelais, doubtless, was sometimes also one of the number.

Calvin's
first work
(ætat. 23)

In 1532 appeared his first work: *Commentary on the De Clementia* of Seneca. In this book he opposes the ideas of the Stoics, and enlarges on the virtue of sympathy and pity. 'Not to be capable of tears is a vice,' he says. His comments



THE CONCIERGERIE OF THE PALAIS DE JUSTICE AT PARIS,
where the Huguenots were imprisoned.

on the appeals of Seneca to Nero to exercise clemency and win his people's love were no doubt intended to influence Francis I.

Many notable men were living at Paris at that time. Clément Marot, for example, lived in what is now the rue de Condé, and there he translated the Psalms into his French metrical version. In the rue de Béthisy, now la rue Saint-Germain Auxerrois, was the house of Admiral Coligny, who, forty years later, perished in the massacre of St Bartholomew. On the statue of Coligny, near the Louvre and close to the Protestant church of the Oratoire, are these words:—*Il fut assassiné n'ayant dans le cœur que la gloire de l'Etat*. It was from the church of Saint-Germain Auxerrois, opposite the Louvre, that the bells rang out the signal for that awful slaughter.

Bernard Palissy lived in the Faubourg St Honoré, and died in the prison of the Bastille, his body being flung to the dogs.

In the rue des Marais, where Racine afterwards lived, many leading Huguenots resided. They had secret communications between their houses, so that they could go from one to the other without being

Paris in
1532

perceived. Thus in the times of persecution they were able to hold their meetings for worship.

Calvin at
Orléans

From the summer of 1532 to the summer of 1533 Calvin, according to documents recently discovered by M. Doinel at Orléans, was acting as *locum tenens* (*substitut annuel*) for the procurator of the 'nation' of Picardy at the University of Orléans. This was his second sojourn in that city.

Struggle
between
Roman
Catholic
theolo-
gians and
the party
of Reform

Exciting events took place soon after the return of Calvin to Paris in 1533. The struggle between the Roman Catholic theologians and the Reform party still continued. The former went so far as to censure a work of Marguerite, Queen of Navarre, entitled, *Mirror of the Sinful Soul*. The king, Henry of Navarre, asked the University the reasons for this censure. The rector of the University at this time was a friend of Calvin, Nicolas Cop, bachelor of medicine and professor at the College of St. Barbe. He assembled the four faculties, and in a lengthened address severely condemned those who attacked the queen. The Faculty of Medicine passed a resolution demanding that, in matters

concerning faith, the Faculty of Theology should speak in its own name, and not in that of the University. And letters were sent to the king, disavowing that which had been done.

Then, on the 1st of November, All Saints' Day, it fell to Cop, as rector, to deliver a solemn discourse before the University assembled in the Church of the Mathurins. This discourse, according to Beza, he asked Calvin to write for him.¹ The first page of the MS. of the sermon has been discovered at Geneva, in Calvin's handwriting, but the whole sermon appears in his *Works*. It is a thoroughly evangelical discourse, and shows how Protestant Calvin had become at this time.

Evangelical Discourse by the Rector of the University of Paris

Such a storm was aroused by Cop's discourse, that Parliament issued an order for his arrest. Cop fled to Basel. A price of 300 livres was set upon his head. Many Lutherans were imprisoned. Calvin also fled. The police searched the College Fortet for him, but in vain. Queen Marguerite inter-

¹ Professor Williston Walker, one of the most recent and scholarly biographers of Calvin, thinks that the balance of evidence is against Calvin's authorship of this address, and that the MS. in his writing may have been but a copy.

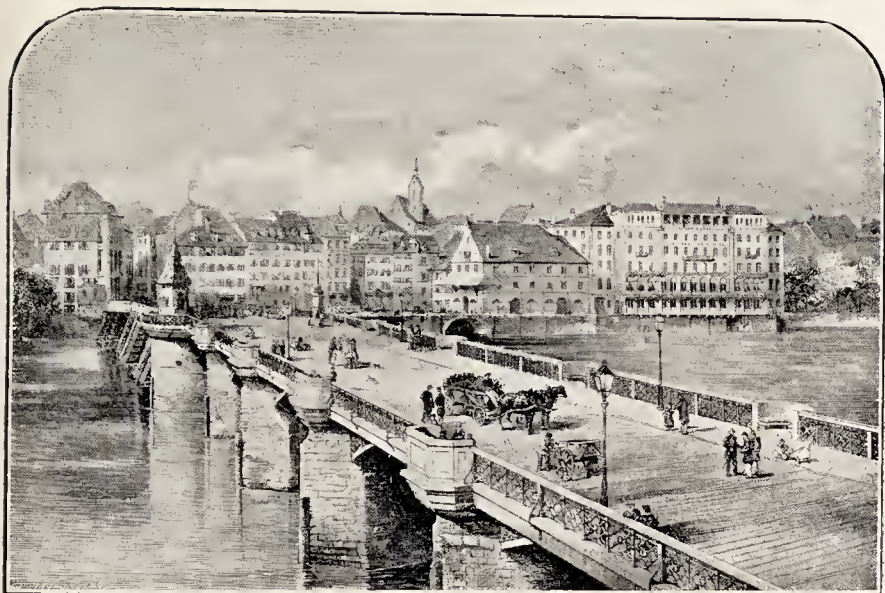
posed on his behalf, and proceedings were stopped. He returned to Paris, but soon after left it again. For a time he sojourned at Angoulême. There he began to write his *Institutes*.

Calvin
breaks
with the
Church of
Rome

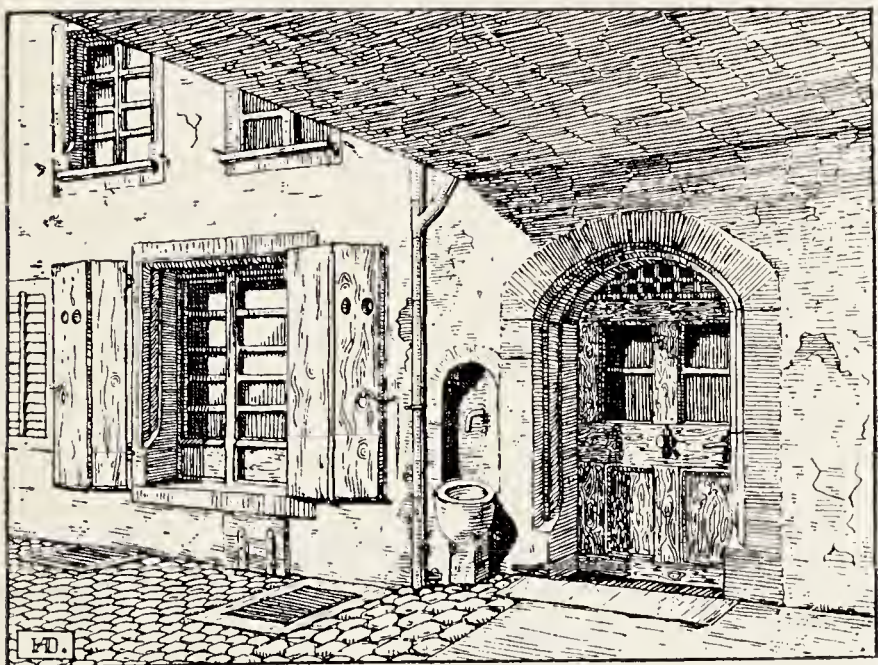
In May 1534 he went to Noyon, and resigned his benefices. On May 26, the register of the Chapter records that he was imprisoned 'for a tumult caused in the church on the eve of the Holy Trinity.' The cause of the tumult is unknown. Doumergue thinks it was a simple pretext which was taken advantage of to imprison the heretic. He was set free on June 3, but two days after was sent to prison again. Subsequently he was released.

Towards the close of 1534 Calvin went to Poitiers. There he met with several Protestants, and they held meetings together in a cave or grotto, where also he celebrated the Lord's Supper.

In the beginning of 1535 he and his friend Tillet arrived at Basel. There Erasmus lived in the Bäumlein-Gasse for many years, there he was in 1535, and there he died in 1536. It was from the press of Froben



BASEL, WITH THE OLD BRIDGE.



PLATTER'S PRINTING-HOUSE AT BASEL,
where the *Institutes* were printed.

in Basel that his Greek New Testament was published.

Calvin lodged there in the Faubourg Saint-Alban, at the house of an honourable matron, Catherina Klein (or Petit). There he completed his *Institutes*, which were printed by Platter of Basel. Part of Platter's printing-house is still standing, in the quarter of Mont Saint-Pierre, the house of 'l'Ours noir,' opposite the 'hotel d'Andlow.'

CHAPTER III

THE *INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION*: ITS ORIGIN AND OBJECT

The
Institutes
dedicated
to Francis
I.

CALVIN expressly tells us in his Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms how he came to write the *Institutes*. All kinds of charges of sedition and wickedness had been brought against the Huguenots, and many Protestants had been already burned in France by the decree of Francis I. 'And this,' he says, 'was the cause which induced me to publish my *Institutes of the Christian Religion*; first, in order to reply to the lying accusations spread by the others, and to clear my brethren, whose death was precious in the sight of the Lord; and then that, since the same cruelties might very soon be practised against many poor persons, foreign nations might at least be touched with some compassion and solicitude for them.' The *Institutes* were dedicated to Francis I.

Doumergue thus sums up Calvin's position at this time :—

‘Francis I. and Calvin! The one, after long hesitations, having just put himself at the head of the persecutors, and the other, after a long preparation, having just put himself at the head of the persecuted.

‘The preparation has indeed been a long one. . . but how much more is it wonderful!

‘When almost a child, driven from Noyon by the plague, the son of Gérard Cauvin met the best Latin master of the period, Mathurin Cordier, who waited to teach him before leaving Paris. Then at Orléans he met the best Greek teacher of the period, Melchior Wolmar, who seems to have come from Germany, to which he presently returns, in order to teach him his method; two incomparable masters who prove to be incomparable pedagogues. Not content with teaching him languages, they speak to him of the Gospel and of Christ.’

Guizot, in his charming volume *Great* M. Guizot
on the *Christians of France*, says of the *Institutes* : *Institutes*
‘In order to understand the fundamental idea and true aim of Calvin's book, we must transport ourselves to the precise period

when he originated and wrote it. Luther, born in 1483, twenty-six years before Calvin, had accomplished, between the years 1517 and 1532, his work of struggle and rupture with the Church of Rome; the Confession of Augsburg had been published [1530]; the Protestant princes had entered into the Smalcaldic League [1530]; the religious peace of Nürnberg had been concluded, and ratified by the Diet of Ratisbon [1532]; in fact, when Calvin left France and took refuge at Basel in 1534, the German Reformation was established in Central and Northern Europe. But the new work was not so far advanced in Western Europe, especially in France and the neighbouring countries speaking the French language. In them the war against the Church of Rome had also been eagerly commenced, the demolition of the ancient edifice had been pursued with ardour, but the work was hindered and opposed by the people, and the construction of a new Church had not even been commenced. The Reformed Church appeared here and there, but without any bond of unity or organization, and even in its cradle a prey to uncertainty, confusion, and anarchy.



CALVIN AT THE AGE OF 27.

The time of his journey to Italy, after he had^dwritten the *Institutes*,

From the fainting by Hanau.

‘Calvin was so strongly impressed by this fact that it became an object of constant anxiety to him, . . . and he set to work to remedy it. . . .

‘His own position in this great enterprise was full of difficulty; this was the time of Rabelais, Erasmus, and Montaigne on the one hand, and of the popes Julius II., Leo X., Cardinal Cajetan, and the Dominican Tetzel on the other. . . . He had at the same time to protest against intellectual licence and ecclesiastical infallibility.’ (Guizot, pp. 178-180.)

Kampschulte, the Old Catholic Professor (I. 275), says that there was good ground for calling the author of the *Institutes*, ‘the Aristotle of the Reformation,’ and adds that the book contains passages worthy to be placed alongside of the finest writings of Pascal or Bossuet.

Were the *Institutes* written in Latin or in French? Formerly, scholars like Haag, Henry, and Louis Bonnet answered: In French. Guizot, in his book above quoted, took the same view, which was also maintained by M. Vielles, director of the seminary at Montauban, in the *Revue de théologie*,

The *Institutes*
first written in
Latin

May 1, 1895. But more recent scholars have come to the conclusion that the answer must be: In Latin. This was the opinion of critical judges like Jules Bonnet, Rilliet, and Kampschulte, and it is very decidedly the judgment of Doumergue, who has weighed all the arguments *pro* and *con*, and is followed by Professor Williston Walker, of Yale University. Doumergue specially bases his conclusion on Calvin's own words in the 'argument' of his French edition of 1541: *A ceste fin j'ay composé ce présent livre. Et premièrement l'ay mis en latin . . . puis après désirant de communiquer ce qui en pouvoit venir de fruct à nostre nation françoise, l'ay aussi translaté en nostre langue.* Doumergue says: 'We conclude not only that the Latin edition of 1536 is the first edition of the *Christian Institutes*, but it is materially and morally impossible that it should not be so.'

English
editions of
the *In-*
stitutes

In the preface to the fourth English edition (1581) the English translator, Thomas Norton, says: 'In the very beginning of the Queen's Majesty's most blessed reign, I translated it out of Latin into English, for the commodity of the

Church of Christ, at the special request of my dear friends of worthy memory, Reginald Wolfe and Edward Whitchurch, the one her Majesty's printer for the Hebrew, Greek and Latin tongues, the other her Highness's printer of the books of Common Prayer.' Reginald Wolfe's name appears as one of the printers of the first English edition of 1561.

And now let us turn to the book itself, of which it is safe to say that no such volume was ever written by a young man in his twenty-seventh year. His scholarship is seen in his quotations from classical and Christian authors, including Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Virgil, Lucretius, Diagoras, Suetonius, Seneca, Plutarch, Xenophon, Ovid, Juvenal, Horace, Homer, Plautus, Lactantius, Statius, Galen, Eusebius, Josephus, Justin Martyr, Augustine, Tertullian.

The Prefatory Address is dated Basel, August 1, 1536, 'To His Most Christian Majesty, the Most Mighty and illustrious Monarch, Francis, King of the French, His Sovereign; John Calvin prays peace and salvation in Christ.'

The *in-*
stitutes a
vindica-
tion of
Protestant
doctrine

In this address, Calvin says that when he first engaged in this work, his intention was to furnish a kind of rudiments, by which those who feel some interest in religion might be trained to true godliness. 'And I toiled at the task,' he says, 'chiefly for the sake of my countrymen the French, multitudes of whom I perceived to be hungering and thirsting after Christ, while very few seemed to have been duly imbued with even a slender knowledge of Him. . . .

'But when I perceived that the fury of certain bad men had risen to such a height in your realm, that there was no place in it for sound doctrine, I thought it might be of service in the same work both to give instruction to my countrymen, and also lay before your Majesty a Confession, from which you may learn what the doctrine is that so inflames the rage of those madmen who are this day, with fire and sword, troubling your kingdom. For I fear not to declare that what I have here given may be regarded as a summary of the very doctrine which, they vociferate, ought to be punished with confiscation, exile, imprisonment, and flames, as well as exterminated by land and sea.'

In reply to the charge that he and his friends were opposed to the Fathers and that they remove the ancient landmarks, he makes the following, amongst other remarks :—

‘ Among the Fathers there were two, the one of whom said,¹ “Our God neither eats nor drinks, and therefore has no need of chalices and salvers”; and the other,² “Sacred rites do not require gold, and things which are not bought with gold, please not by gold.” They step beyond the boundary, therefore, when in sacred matters they are so much delighted with gold, silver, ivory, marble, gems, and silks, that unless everything is overlaid with costly show, or rather insane luxury, they think God is not worshipped.

The Protestant religion not opposed to the Fathers

‘ It was a Father who said,³ “He ate flesh freely on the day on which others abstained from it, because he was a Christian.” They overleap the boundaries, therefore, when they doom to perdition every soul that, during Lent, shall have tasted flesh.

‘ There were two Fathers, the one of whom said,⁴ “A monk not labouring with

¹ Acatius in lib. XI. cap. 16, F. Triport. *Hist.*

² Ambrose lib. II. *De Officiis*, cap. 28.

³ Spiridion, *Trip. Hist.* lib. I. cap. 10.

⁴ *Trip. Hist.* lib. VIII. cap. 1.

his own hands is no better than a violent man and a robber"; and the other,¹ "Monks, however assiduous they may be in study, meditation, and prayer, must not live by others." This boundary, too, they transgressed, when they placed lazy, gormandizing monks in dens and stews, to gorge themselves on other men's substance.

'It was a Father who said,² "It is a horrid abomination to see in Christian temples a painted image of Christ or of any saint." Nor was this pronounced by the voice of a single individual; but an Ecclesiastical Council also decreed,³ "Let nought that is worshipped be depicted on walls." Very far are they from keeping within these boundaries when they leave not a corner without images."

'Another Father counselled,⁴ "That after performing the offices of humanity to the dead in their burial, we should leave them at rest." These limits they burst through when they keep up a perpetual anxiety about the dead.

¹ August. *de Opere Monach.* cap. 7.

² Epiph. *Epist. ab Hieron. versa.*

³ Conc. Elibert. can. 36.

⁴ Ambr. *de Abraha*, lib. 1, c. 7.

‘It is a Father who testifies,¹ “That the substance of bread and wine in the Eucharist does not cease, but remains, just as the nature and substance of man remains united to the Godhead in the Lord Jesus Christ.” This boundary they pass in pretending that, as soon as the words of our Lord are pronounced, the substance of bread and wine ceases, and is transubstantiated into body and blood. . . .

‘There were two Fathers, the one of whom decided that those were to be excluded altogether from partaking of Christ’s sacred supper,² who, contented with communion in one kind, abstained from the other ; while the other Father strongly contends³ that the blood of the Lord ought not to be denied to the Christian people, who, in confessing Him, are enjoined to shed their own blood. These landmarks also they have removed, when, by an unalterable law, they ordered the very thing which the former Father punished with excommunication, and the latter condemned for a valid reason. . . .

¹ Gelasius, *Papa in Conc. Rom.*

² Gelas. can. *Comperimus, De Consec.* dist. 2.

³ Cypr. *Epist.* 2. lib. i., *De Lapsis.*

‘It was a Father who denied¹ that the ministers of the Church should be interdicted from marrying, and pronounced married life to be a state of chastity; and there were other Fathers who assented to his decision. These boundaries they overstepped in rigidly binding their priests to celibacy.’

Calvin
vindicates
his own
character

In the same address to the king, he refers to ‘the absurd insinuations’ of their adversaries that nothing else is wished and aimed at by this new gospel than opportunity for sedition and impunity for all kinds of vice. . . . ‘We, forsooth, meditate the subversion of kingdoms; we, whose voice was never heard in faction, and whose life, while passed under you, is known to have been always quiet and simple; even now, when exiled from our home, we nevertheless cease not to pray for all prosperity to your person and your kingdom.’

The *In-*
stitutes
based on
the Ap-
ostles’
Creed

In a statement on the Method and Arrangement of the *Institutes*, from an Epitome of that work by Caspar Olevian (*Inst.*, vol. I. p. 34), it is said :

¹ Cypr. *Epist.* 2. lib. ii.

‘The subject handled by the author is twofold : the former, the knowledge of God, which leads to a blessed immortality ; and the latter (which is subordinate to the former), the knowledge of ourselves. With this view the author simply adopts the arrangement of the Apostles’ Creed, as that with which all Christians are most familiar. For as the Creed consists of four parts, the first relating to God the Father, the second to the Son, the third to the Holy Spirit, and the fourth to the Church, so the author, in fulfilment of his task, divides his *Institutes* into four parts, corresponding to those of the Creed.’

CHAPTER IV

THE TEACHING OF THE *INSTITUTES* (I.)

STARTING with the first article of the Creed, the belief in God the Father Almighty, Calvin says :—

Plato on
the know-
ledge of
God

‘Moreover, if all are born and live for the express purpose of learning to know God, and if the knowledge of God, in so far as it fails to produce this effect, is fleeting and vain, it is clear that all those who do not direct the whole thoughts and actions of their lives to this end fail to fulfil the law of their being. This did not escape the observation even of philosophers. For it is the very thing which Plato meant (in *Phæd. et Theæt.*) when he taught, as he often does, that the chief good of the soul consists in resemblance to God; *i.e.*, when, by means of knowing Him, she is wholly transformed into Him.’ (*Inst.*, Book I. chap. iii.)

On the use of images in the worship of God, he says —

‘The worship which they pay to their images they cloak with the name of *εἰδωλοδουλεία* (*idolodulia*), and deny to be *εἰδωλολατρεία* (*idolatria*). So they speak, holding that the worship which they call *dulia* may, without insult to God, be paid to statues and pictures. Hence, they think themselves blameless if they are only the *servants*, and not the *worshippers*, of idols; as if it were not a lighter matter to *worship* than to *serve*.’ (*Inst.*, Book I. chap. xi. § 11.)

The distinction between *Doulla* and *Latria*

On the same subject, he says—

‘I am not, however, so superstitious as to think that all visible representations of every kind are unlawful. But as sculpture and painting are gifts of God, what I insist for is, that both shall be used purely and lawfully. . . . The only things, therefore, which ought to be painted or sculptured, are things which can be presented to the eye; the majesty of God, which is far beyond the reach of any eye, must not be dishonoured by unbecoming representations.’ (*Inst.*, Book I. chap. xi. § 12.)

Not opposed to sculpture and painting

The early
Church
free from
images

V

‘For five hundred years, during which religion was in a more prosperous condition, and a purer doctrine flourished, Christian churches were completely free from visible representations.’ (*Inst.*, Book I. chap. xi. § 13.)

The free-
dom of the
will

Adam, says Calvin, might have stood if he chose. He had a free choice of good and evil. ‘But those who, while they profess to be the disciples of Christ, still seek for free-will in man, notwithstanding of his being lost and drowned in spiritual destruction, labour under manifold delusion, making a heterogeneous mixture of inspired doctrine and philosophical opinions, and so erring as to both.’ (*Inst.*, Book I. chap. xv. § 8.)

Divine
Provi-
dence

The Providence of God, says Calvin, sustains, cherishes, and superintends all the things which He has made, to the very minutest, even to a sparrow. (Book I. chap. xvi. § 1.)

This Providence is opposed to fortune and fortuitous causes. Whoso has learned from the mouth of Christ that all the hairs of his head are numbered (Matt. x. 30) will hold that all events are governed by

the secret counsel of God. (Chap. xvi. § 2.)

The omnipotence of God involves this providence. ‘This is the solace of the faithful in their adversity, that everything which they endure is by the ordination and command of God, that they are under His hand’ (chap. xvi. § 3). This, he says, is the cure for superstitious fears. Such are the fears inspired in some by dangers from created objects, ‘as if they had in themselves a power to hurt us, or could hurt at random or by chance; or as if we had not in God a sufficient protection against them.’ (*Ibid.*)

‘Particular events are evidences of the special providence of God. In the wilderness, God caused a south wind to blow, and brought the people a plentiful supply of birds (Exod. xix. 13).’ So Calvin quotes the whirlwind in the case of Jonah; the words of Ps. civ. 3, 4; cvii. 25, 29; Isa. iii. 1; Amos iv. 9, etc. (*Ibid.* § 7).

This doctrine is not the Stoical dogma concerning Fate. ‘For we do not, with the Stoics, imagine a necessity consisting of a perpetual chain of causes, and a kind of involved series contained in Nature, but we

This doctrine not Stoicism

hold that God is the disposer and ruler of all things—that from the remotest eternity, according to His own wisdom, He decreed what He was to do, and now by His power executes what He decreed. Hence we maintain, that by His providence, not heaven and earth and inanimate creatures only, but also the counsels and wills of men, are so governed as to move exactly in the course which He has destined.’ (Chap. xvi. 8.)

Events, though thus ordered by Divine Providence, have the appearance of being fortuitous, such being the form under which they present themselves to us. . . . ‘ Let us suppose, for example, that a merchant, after entering a forest in company with trustworthy individuals, imprudently strays away from his companions, and wanders bewildered till he falls into a den of robbers and is murdered. His death was not only foreseen by the eye of God, but had been fixed by His decree. For it is said, not that He foresaw how far the life of each individual should extend, but that He determined and fixed the bounds, which could not be passed (Job xiv. 5).’ (Chap. xvi. § 9.)

‘As regards future events, Solomon easily reconciles human deliberation with Divine providence. . . . He thus expresses himself: “A man’s heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps” (Prov. xvi. 9); intimating, that the eternal decrees of God by no means prevent us from proceeding, under His will, to provide for ourselves, and arrange all our affairs. And the reason for this is clear. For he who has fixed the boundaries of our life, has at the same time entrusted us with the care of it, provided us with the means of preserving it, forewarned us of the dangers to which we are exposed, and supplied cautions and remedies, that we may not be overwhelmed unawares.’ (Chap. xvii. § 4.)

As all contingencies whatsoever depend on the Divine Providence, therefore, neither thefts nor adulteries, nor murders, are perpetrated without an interposition of the Divine Will. ‘Why then, they ask, should the thief be punished for robbing him whom the Lord chose to chastise with poverty? Why should the murderer be punished for slaying him whose life the Lord had terminated? If all such persons serve the

Human
delibera-
tion and
Divine
Provi-
dence

Divine
decree and
human
guilt

will of God, why should they be punished? I deny that they serve the will of God. For we cannot say that he who is carried away by a wicked mind performs service on the order of God, when he is only following his own malignant desires. He obeys God, who, being instructed in his will, hastens in the direction in which God calls him. But how are we so instructed unless by His Word? The will declared by His Word is, therefore, that which we must keep in view in acting. God requires of us nothing but what He enjoins. If we design anything contrary to His precept, it is not obedience, but contumacy and transgression. But if He did not will it, we could not do it. I admit this. But do we act wickedly for the purpose of yielding obedience to Him? This, assuredly, He does not command. . . . I concede more—that thieves and murderers, and other evil-doers, are instruments of Divine Providence, being employed by the Lord Himself to execute the judgments which He has resolved to inflict. But I deny that this forms any excuse for their misdeeds. For how? Will they implicate God in the same iniquity with themselves, or will they cloak their depravity by His righteousness?

They cannot exculpate themselves, for their own conscience condemns them; they cannot charge God, since they perceive the whole wickedness in themselves, and nothing in Him save the legitimate use of their wickedness.' (Chap. xvii. § 5.)

'This knowledge [of God's overruling Providence] is necessarily followed by gratitude in prosperity, patience in adversity, and incredible security for the time to come. . . . If anything adverse befalls him [the Christian], he will forthwith raise his mind to God, whose hand is most effectual in impressing us with patience and placid moderation of mind.' He then instances the cases of Joseph's forgiveness of his brethren: 'God did send me before you to preserve life;' 'As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good' (Gen. xlv. 5; l. 20); Job's resignation amid his losses: 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord' (Job i. 21); David's remark about Shimei: 'Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David' (2 Sam. xvi. 10). (Chap. xvii. §§ 7 and 8.)

Practical
results of
belief in
God's Pro-
vidence

Inferior
causes

‘At the same time, the Christian will not overlook inferior causes.’ He will show gratitude to those by whom he is benefited. (§ 9.)

Peace of
mind

‘Here we are forcibly reminded of the inestimable felicity of a pious mind. Innumerable are the ills which beset human life, and present death in as many different forms.’ [Then follows an eloquent passage about the dangers which beset human life—from disease, in travelling, etc.] ‘But when once the light of Divine Providence has illumined the believer’s soul, he is relieved and set free, not only from the extreme fear and anxiety which formerly oppressed him, but from all care.’ (Chap. xvii. §§ 10, 11.)

Is God the
author of
sin?

Dealing with the objection that, if God not only uses the agency of the wicked, but also governs their counsels and affections, He is the author of all their sins; and that therefore, men, in executing what God has decreed, are unjustly condemned, because they are obeying His will, Calvin says:—

‘Here *will* is improperly confounded with *precept*, though it is obvious, from innumerable examples, that there is the greatest difference between them. When Absalom

defiled his father's bed, though God was pleased thus to avenge the adultery of David, He did not therefore enjoin an abandoned son to commit incest, unless, perhaps in respect of David, as David himself says of Shimei's curses. For, while he confesses that Shimei acts by the order of God, he by no means commends the obedience, as if that petulant dog had been yielding obedience to a divine command; but, recognising in his tongue the scourge of God, he submits patiently to be chastised. Thus we must hold, that while by means of the wicked God performs what He had secretly decreed, they are not excusable, as if they were obeying His precept, which of set purpose they violate according to their lust.' (Chap. xviii. § 4.)

'Modest minds will always be satisfied with Augustine's answer, "Since the Father delivered up the Son, Christ His own body, and Judas his Master, how in such a case is God just, and man guilty, but just because in the one act which they did, the reasons for which they did it are different?" (August., Ep. 48, *ad Vincentium*.)'

'Original sin, then, may be defined as a ^{original} hereditary corruption and depravity of our ^{sin}

nature, extending to all the parts of the soul, which first makes us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and then produces in us works which in Scripture are termed works of the flesh.' (Book II. chap. i. § 8.)

Freedom
of the will

(The Philo-
sophers)

He quotes Plato, Cicero, Aristotle, and Seneca, as teaching that the will is free. 'Thus, in short, all philosophers maintain that human reason is sufficient for right government ; that the will, which is inferior, may indeed be solicited to evil by sense, but having a free choice, there is nothing to prevent it from following reason as its guide in all things.' (Book II. chap. ii. § 3.)

(Theolo-
gians)

' Among ecclesiastical writers, although there is none who did not acknowledge that sound reason in man was seriously injured by sin, and the will greatly entangled by vicious desires, yet many of them made too near an approach to the philosophers. . . . Chrysostom says, " God having placed good and evil in our power, has given us full freedom of choice ; He does not keep back the unwilling, but embraces the willing " (*Homil. de Prodit. Judæ*). . . . In unison with this, Jerome says " It is ours to begin, God's to finish ; it is ours to offer what we

can, His to supply what we cannot.”
 (Dialog. iii., *Cont. Pelag.*)’ (Book II. chap.
 ii. § 4.)

‘The thing meant by free will, though constantly occurring in all writers, few have defined. Origen, however, seems to have stated the common opinion when he said, It is a power of reason to discern between good and evil; of will, to choose the one or other. Nor does Augustine differ from him when he says, It is a power of reason and will to choose the good, grace assisting—to choose the bad, grace desisting. . . . Peter Lombard, and the schoolmen, preferred the definition of Augustine, both because it was clearer, and did not exclude divine grace, without which they saw that the will was not sufficient of itself. They, however, add something of their own, because they deemed it either better or necessary for clearer explanation. First, they agree that the term *will* (*arbitrium*) has reference to reason, whose office it is to distinguish between good and evil, and that the epithet *free* properly belongs to the will, which may incline either way. Wherefore, since liberty belongs to the

Definition
 of free-
 dom of the
 will
 (Origen)

(Augustine)

(Peter
 Lombard
 and the
 School-
 men)

(Thomas
Aquinas)

will, Thomas Aquinas says (Part I. Quæst. 83, Art. 3) that the most congruous definition is to call free will an elective power, combining intelligence and appetite, but inclining more to appetite. We now perceive in what it is they suppose the faculty of free will to consist, viz., in reason and will. It remains to see how much they attribute to each.

‘In general, they are wont to place under the free will of man only intermediate things, viz., those which pertain not to the kingdom of God, while they refer true righteousness to the special grace of God and spiritual regeneration. . . .

‘The schools have adopted a distinction which enumerates three kinds of freedom (see Lombard, Lib. II. Dist. 25); the first, a freedom from necessity; the second, a freedom from sin; and the third, a freedom from misery: the first naturally so inherent in man that he cannot possibly be deprived of it; while through sin the other two have been lost. I willingly admit this distinction, except in so far as it confounds *necessity* with *compulsion*. How widely the things differ, and how important it is to attend to the difference,

Necessity
v. compul-
sion

will appear elsewhere.' (Book II. chap. ii. §§ 3, 4, 5.)

'All this being admitted, it will be beyond dispute that free will does not enable any man to perform good works, unless he is assisted by grace; indeed, the special grace which the elect alone receive through regeneration. . . . In this way, then, man is said to have free will, not because he has a free choice of good and evil, but because he acts voluntarily, and not by compulsion. This is perfectly true: but why should so small a matter have been dignified with so proud a title? An admirable freedom! that man is not forced to be the servant of sin, while he is, however, ἐθελεῖ δουλεύειν (a voluntary slave); his will being bound by the fetters of sin.' (Book II. chap. ii. §§ 6, 7.)

Free will does not mean free choice

The term 'free will' is not therefore appropriate

The Fathers have the term 'free will' constantly in their mouths, but they, at the same time, declare what extent of meaning they attach to it. 'In particular, Augustine hesitates not to call the will *a slave*. . . . Again he says, that free will having been made a captive, can do nothing in the way of righteousness.

The term used by the Fathers in limited sense

Again, that no will is free which has not been made so by divine grace. . . .

Better not
use the
term 'free
will'

'If any one then,' says Calvin, 'chooses to make use of this term, without attaching any bad meaning to it, he shall not be troubled by me on that account; but as it cannot be retained without very great danger, I think the abolition of it would be of great advantage to the Church. I am unwilling to use it myself; and others, if they will take my advice, will do well to abstain from it.' (Book II. chap. ii. § 8.)

General
teaching
of the
Fathers on
free will

After quoting Cyprian, who says, 'Let us glory in nothing, because nothing is ours,' and Chrysostom, who says, 'That every man is not only naturally a sinner, but is wholly sin, Calvin says of the Fathers generally:—'This much, however, I dare affirm, that though they sometimes go too far in extolling free will, the main object which they had in view was to teach man entirely to renounce all self-confidence, and place his strength in God alone.' (Book II. chap. ii. § 9.)

The
human
intellect

'We see that there has been implanted in the human mind a certain desire of investi-

gating truth, to which it never would aspire unless some relish for truth antecedently existed. There is, therefore, now, in the human mind, discernment to this extent, that it is naturally influenced by the love of truth, the neglect of which in the lower animals is a proof of their gross and irrational nature. Still it is true that this love of truth fails before it reaches the goal, forthwith falling away into vanity. . . .

Love of
truth

‘Therefore, in reading profane authors, the admirable light of truth displayed in them should remind us that the human mind, however much fallen and perverted from its original integrity, is still adorned and invested with admirable gifts from its Creator. If we reflect that the Spirit of God is the only fountain of truth, we will be careful, as we would avoid offering insult to Him, not to reject or condemn truth, wherever it appears.’ (Book II. chap. ii. §§ 12, 15.)

‘We must now explain what the power of human reason is, in regard to the kingdom of God, and spiritual discernment, which consists chiefly of three things—the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His paternal

Human
reason in
relation to
spiritual
things

favour towards us, which constitutes our salvation, and the method of regulating our conduct in accordance with the Divine Law. With regard to the former two, but more properly the second, men otherwise the most ingenious are blinder than moles. I deny not, indeed, that in the writings of philosophers we meet occasionally with shrewd and apposite remarks on the nature of God, though they invariably savour somewhat of giddy imagination. As observed above, the Lord has bestowed on them some slight perception of His Godhead, that they might not plead ignorance as an excuse for their impiety, and has, at times, instigated them to deliver some truths, the confession of which should be to their own condemnation. Still, though seeing, they saw not. . . . So the great truths, what God is in Himself, and what He is in relation to us, human reason makes not the least approach' (see Book III. chap. ii. §§ 14, 15, 16). (Book II. chap. ii. § 18).

The
human
mind in
relation to
conduct

Quoting Romans ii. 14, 15, Calvin says,
'If the Gentiles have the righteousness of
the law naturally engraven on their minds, we
certainly cannot say that they are altogether

blind as to the rule of life. . . . Let us consider, however, for what end this knowledge of the law was given to men. . . . He [Paul] had said a little before, that those who sinned in the law will be judged by the law; and those who have sinned without the law will perish without the law. As it might seem unaccountable that the Gentiles should perish without any previous judgment, he immediately subjoins that conscience served them instead of the law, and was therefore sufficient for their righteous condemnation. The end of the natural law, therefore, is to render man inexcusable.' (Book II. chap. ii. § 22.)

‘When the will is enchained as the slave of sin, it cannot make a movement towards goodness, far less steadily pursue it. Every such movement is the first step in that conversion to God, which in Scripture is entirely ascribed to divine grace. Thus Jeremiah says, “Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned” (Jer. xxxi. 18). . . . Moreover, when I say that the will, deprived of liberty, is led or dragged by necessity to evil, it is strange that any should deem the expression harsh, seeing there is no absurdity in it,

Corruption of the
human
will

and it is not at variance with pious use. It does, however, offend those who know not how to distinguish between necessity and compulsion. . . . If the free will of God in doing good is not impeded, because He necessarily must do good ; if the devil, who can do nothing but evil, nevertheless sins voluntarily ; can it be said that man sins less voluntarily because he is under a necessity of sinning? This necessity is uniformly proclaimed by Augustine, who, even when pressed by the invidious cavil of Celestius, hesitated not to express it in the following terms : “ Man through liberty became a sinner, but corruption, ensuing as the penalty, has converted liberty into necessity ” (August., *Lib. de Perf. Instit.*). Whenever mention is made of the subject, he hesitates not to speak in this way of the necessary bondage of sin (August., *de Natura et Gratia, et alibi*). Let this, then, be regarded as the sum of the distinction. Man, since he was corrupted by the fall, sins not forced or unwilling, but voluntarily, by a most froward bias of the mind ; not by violent compulsion, or external force, but by the movement of his own passion ; and yet such is the depravity of his nature, that he

cannot move and act except in the direction of evil. If this is true, the thing not obscurely expressed is, that he is under a necessity of sinning.' (Book II. chap. iii. § 5.)

'If sin, they say, is necessary, it ceases to be sin; if it is voluntary, it may be avoided. . . . I deny that sin ought to be the less imputed because it is necessary; and, on the other hand, I deny the inference that sin may be avoided because it is voluntary. If anyone will dispute with God, and endeavour to evade His judgment, by pretending that he could not have done otherwise, the answer already given is sufficient, that it is owing not to creation, but the corruption of nature, that man has become the slave of sin, and can will nothing but evil. For whence that impotence of which the wicked so readily avail themselves as an excuse, but just because Adam voluntarily subjected himself to the tyranny of the devil?' (Book II. chap. v. § 1).

Objections
to Necessitarian
View

'They add, that unless virtue and vice proceed from free choice, it is absurd either to punish man or reward him. Although this argument is taken from Aristotle, I

'Absurdity of rewards and punishments'

admit that it is also used by Chrysostom and Jerome. . . .

‘With regard to punishment, I answer that it is properly inflicted on those by whom the guilt is contracted. What matters it whether you sin with a free or an enslaved judgment, so long as you sin voluntarily, especially when man is proved to be a sinner because he is under the bondage of sin? In regard to the rewards of righteousness, is there any absurdity in acknowledging that they depend on the kindness of God rather than our own merits? . . . And yet, as the beneficence and liberality of God are manifold and inexhaustible, the grace which He bestows upon us, inasmuch as He makes it our own, He recompenses as if the virtuous acts were our own.’ (Book II. chap. v. § 2.)

‘Exhortation is vain’

‘Still it is insisted, that exhortations are vain, warnings superfluous, and rebukes absurd, if the sinner possesses not the power to obey. When similar objections were urged against Augustine, he was obliged to write his book, *De Correptione et Gratia*, where he has fully disposed of them. The substance of his answer to his opponents is

this : “ O man ! learn from the precept what you ought to do ; learn from correction that it is your own fault if you have not the power ; and learn in prayer whence it is that you may receive the power.” . . . What purpose, then, is served by exhortations ? It is this : As the wicked, with obstinate heart, despise them, they will be a testimony against them when they stand at the judgment-seat of God ; nay, they even now strike and lash their consciences. . . . But their chief use is to be seen in the case of believers, in whom the Lord, while He always acts by His Spirit, also omits not the instrumentality of His Word, but employs it, and not without effect.’ (Book II. chap. v. §§ 5 and 6.)

CHAPTER V

THE TEACHING OF THE *INSTITUTES* (II.)

The
Sabbath

(Three
uses of)

IN three things, says Calvin, the observance of the Fourth Commandment consists.

✓ 'First, under the rest of the seventh day, the Divine Lawgiver meant to furnish the people of Israel with a type of the spiritual rest by which believers were to cease from their own works, and allow God to work in them. Secondly, He meant that there should be a stated day on which they should assemble to hear the Law, and perform religious rites, or which, at least, they should specially employ in meditating on His works, and be thereby trained to piety. Thirdly, He meant that servants, and those who lived under the authority of others, should be indulged with a day of rest, and thus have some intermission from labour.' (Book II. chap. viii. § 28.)

'On the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ, the ceremonial part of the [4th] command-



THEODORUS BEZA *Verulanus*
Natus. 1^o 1519 Obijt. 1^o 1605

THE FRIEND AND FIRST BIOGRAPHER OF CALVIN.

ment was abolished. He is the truth, at whose presence all the emblems vanish ; the body, at the sight of which the shadows disappear. . . . Hence, as the Apostle says, " Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days ; which are a shadow of things to come ; but the body is of Christ " (Col. ii. 16, 17), meaning by body the whole essence of the truth, as is well explained in that passage. This is not contented with one day, but requires the whole course of our lives, until being completely dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life of God. Christians, therefore, should have nothing to do with a superstitious observance of days.'

Referring to the two other uses of the Sabbath, assembling for worship and giving relaxation from labour to servants and labourers, he says, ' Who can deny that both are equally applicable to us as to the Jews ? Religious meetings are enjoined us by the Word of God ; their necessity, experience itself sufficiently demonstrates. But unless these meetings are stated, and have fixed days allotted to them, how can

they be held?' (Book II. chap. viii. §§ 31, 32.)

The
Descent
into Hell

To explain 'He descended into hell' by saying that it is equivalent to 'He was *buried*' would be, Calvin thinks, to imply a superfluous tautology in the Creed. His own explanation is as follows:—

'Nothing had been done if Christ had only endured corporeal death. In order to interpose between us and God's anger, and satisfy His righteous judgment, it was necessary that He should feel the weight of divine vengeance. Whence also it was necessary that He should engage, as it were, at close quarters with the powers of hell and the horrors of eternal death. . . . Hence there is nothing strange in its being said that He descended to hell, seeing He endured the death which is inflicted on the wicked by an angry God. It is frivolous and ridiculous to object that in this way the order is perverted, it being absurd that an event which preceded burial should be placed after it. But after explaining what Christ endured in the sight of man, the Creed appropriately adds the invisible and incomprehensible judgment which He endured

before God, to teach us that not only was the body of Christ given up as the price of redemption, but that there was a greater and more excellent price—that He bore in His soul the tortures of condemned and ruined man.’ (Book II. chap. xvi. § 10.)

‘ The third part of this liberty is, that we are not bound before God to any observance of external things which are in themselves indifferent (*ἀδιάφορα*), but that we are now at full liberty either to use or omit them. The knowledge of this liberty is very necessary to us ; where it is wanting our consciences will have no rest, there will be no end of superstition. In the present day, many think us absurd in raising a question as to the free eating of flesh, the free use of dress and holidays, and similar frivolous trifles, as they think them ; but they are of more importance than is commonly supposed. For when once the conscience is entangled in the net, it enters a long and inextricable labyrinth, from which it is afterwards most difficult to escape. When a man begins to doubt whether it is lawful for him to use linen for sheets, shirts, napkins and handkerchiefs, he will not long

Christian
Liberty

be secure as to hemp, and will at last have doubts as to tow ; for he will revolve in his mind whether he cannot sup without napkins, or dispense with handkerchiefs. Should he deem a daintier food unlawful, he will afterwards feel uneasy for using loaf-bread and common eatables, because he will think that his body might possibly be supported on a still meaner food. If he hesitates as to a more genial wine, he will scarcely drink the worst with a good conscience ; at last he will not dare to touch water, if more than usually sweet and pure. In fine, he will come to this, that he will deem it criminal to trample on a straw lying in his way. For it is no trivial dispute that is here commenced, the point in debate being, whether the use of this thing or that is in accordance with the divine will, which ought to take precedence of all our acts and counsels.' (Book III. chap. xix. § 7.)

Predesti-
nation

‘ By predestination ¹ we mean the eternal decree of God, by which He determined with Himself whatever He wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not

¹ See the discussion of Calvin's teaching on this and other doctrines in the last chapter of the present work.

created on equal terms, but some are pre-ordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation ; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.' Then he quotes in support of this Deut. xxxii. 8, 9 ; iv. 37 ; x. 14, 15 ; Ps. xxxiii. 12 ; 1 Sam. xii. 22, etc. ; Ps. lxxviii. 67, 68 ; Mal. i. 2, 3. (Book III. chap. xxi. §§ 5, 6, 7.)

Farther on (Book III. chap. xxii, 7) he quotes the statements of Christ in John vi. 37, 39, 44, 45 ; xiii. 18 ; xvii. 9.

' Since the arrangement of all things is in the hand of God, since to Him belongs the disposal of life and death, He arranges all things by His sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify Him by their destruction.' (Book III. chap. xxiii. § 6).

' I again ask how it is that the fall of Adam involves so many nations with their infant children in eternal death without remedy, unless that it so seemed meet to

God? Here the most loquacious tongues must be dumb. The decree, I admit, is dreadful; and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before He made him, and foreknew, because He had so ordained by His decree.' (Book III. xxiii. § 7.) (See below, p. 179.)

Does Pre-
destina-
tion 'de-
stroy all
exhorta-
tions to a
pious
life?'

'We have already seen how plainly and audibly Paul preaches the doctrine of free election: is he, therefore, cold in admonishing and exhorting? Let those good zealots compare his vehemence with theirs, and they will find that they are ice, while he is all fervour.' He then quotes 1 Thess. iv. 4, 7; Eph. ii. 10. (Book III. chap. xxiii. § 13.)

'Who will
have all
men to be
saved' (1
Tim. ii. 4)

On this passage Calvin says that St Paul 'had commanded Timothy that prayers should be regularly offered up in the Church for kings and princes; but as it seemed somewhat absurd that prayer should be offered up for a class of men who were almost hopeless (all of them being not only aliens from the body of Christ, but doing their utmost to overthrow His kingdom), he adds, that it was acceptable to God, Who will have all men to be saved. By this he

assuredly means nothing more than that the way of salvation was not shut against any order of men ; that, on the contrary, He had manifested His mercy in such a way, that He would have none debarred from it. . . . We must expound the passage so as to reconcile it with another, I “will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy” (Ex. xxxiii. 19). He who selects those whom He is to visit in mercy does not impart it to all. But since it clearly appears that he is there speaking not of individuals, but of orders of men, let us have done with a longer discussion.’ (Book III. chap. xxiv. § 16.)

‘When in the Creed we profess to believe the Church, reference is made not only to the visible Church of which we are now treating, but also to all the elect of God, including in the number even those who have departed this life. . . . The particle *in* is often interpolated, but without any probable ground. I confess, indeed, that it is the more usual form, and is not unsupported by antiquity, since the Nicene Creed, as quoted in Ecclesiastical History,

‘I believe
the
Church’

adds the preposition. At the same time, we may perceive from early writers, that the expression received without controversy in ancient times was to believe "the Church," and not "in the Church." This is not only the expression used by Augustine, and that ancient writer, whoever he may have been, whose treatise, *De Symboli Expositione*, is extant under the name of Cyprian, but they distinctly remark that the addition of the preposition would make the expression improper, and they give good grounds for so thinking. We declare that we believe in God, both because our mind reclines upon Him as true, and our conscience is fully satisfied in Him. This cannot be said of the Church, just as it cannot be said of the forgiveness of sins, or the resurrection of the body.' (Book IV. chap. i. § 2.)

The
Church
should not
be lightly
abandoned

'Let both points, therefore, be regarded as fixed; *first*, that there is no excuse for him who spontaneously abandons the external communion of a Church in which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered; *secondly*, that notwithstanding of the faults of a few or

of many, there is nothing to prevent us from there duly professing our faith in the ordinances instituted by God, because a pious conscience is not injured by the unworthiness of another, whether he be a pastor or a private individual; and sacred rites are not less pure and salutary to a man who is holy and upright, from being at the same time handled by the impure.' (Book IV. chap. i. § 19.)

'It ought not, however, to be omitted, that the Church, in exercising severity, ought to accompany it with the spirit of meekness. For, as Paul enjoins, we must always take care that he on whom discipline is exercised be not "swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" (2 Cor. ii. 7); for in this way, instead of cure there would be destruction. The rule of moderation will be best obtained from the end contemplated. For the object of excommunication being to bring the sinner to repentance and remove bad examples, in order that the name of Christ may not be evil spoken of, nor others tempted to the same evil courses: if we consider this, we shall easily understand how far severity should be carried, and at

Discipline
should not
be too
severe

what point it ought to cease. Therefore, when the sinner gives the Church evidence of his repentance, and by this evidence does what in him lies to obliterate the offence, he ought not on any account to be urged farther. If he is urged, the vigour now exceeds due measure. In this respect it is impossible to excuse the excessive austerity of the ancients, which was altogether at variance with the injunction of our Lord, and strangely perilous. For when they enjoined a formal repentance, and excluded from communion for three, or four, or seven years, or for life, what could the result be, but either great hypocrisy or very great despair?' (Book IV. chap. xii. § 8.)

Baptism

‘We ought to consider that at whatever time we are baptized, we are washed and purified once for the whole of life. Wherefore, as often as we fall, we must recall the remembrance of our baptism, and thus fortify our minds, so as to feel certain and secure of the remission of sins. For though, when once administered, it seems to have passed, it is not abolished by subsequent sins. For the purity of Christ

as therein offered to us, always is in force, and is not destroyed by any stain : it wipes and washes away all our defilements. Nor must we hence assume a licence of sinning for the future (there is certainly nothing in it to countenance such audacity) ; but this doctrine is intended only for those who, when they have sinned, groan under their sins burdened and oppressed, that they may have wherewith to support and console themselves, and not rush headlong into despair. Thus Paul says that Christ was made a propitiation for us, for the remission of sins that are past (Rom. iii. 25).’ (Book IV. chap. xv. § 3.)

‘ It is now clear, how false the doctrine **Baptism** is which some long ago taught, and others still persist in, that by baptism we are exempted and set free from original sin, and from the corruption which was propagated by Adam to all his posterity. . . . Believers become assured by baptism that this condemnation is entirely withdrawn from them, since (as has been said) the Lord by this sign promises that a full and entire remission has been made, both of the guilt which was imputed to us, and the

penalty incurred by the guilt.' (Book IV. chap. xv. § 10.)

The Lord's
Supper

' There are some who define the eating of the flesh of Christ, and the drinking of His blood, to be, in one word, nothing more than believing in Christ Himself. But Christ seems to me to have intended to teach something more express and more sublime in that noble discourse in which He recommends the eating of His flesh, viz.—that we are quickened by the true partaking of Him, which He designated by the terms eating and drinking, lest any one should suppose that the life which we obtain from Him is obtained by simple knowledge. For as it is not the sight but the eating of bread that gives nourishment to the body, so the soul must partake of Christ truly and thoroughly, that by His energy it may grow up into spiritual life. Meanwhile, we admit that this is nothing else than the eating of faith, and that no other eating can be imagined. But there is this difference between their mode of speaking and mine. According to them, to eat is merely to believe ; while I maintain that the flesh of Christ is eaten by believing, because it is

made ours by faith, and that that eating is the effect and fruit of faith ; or, if you will have it more clearly, according to them eating is faith, whereas it rather seems to me to be a consequence of faith. The difference is little in words, but not little in reality. For, although the apostle teaches that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Eph. iii. 17), no one will interpret that dwelling to be faith. All see that it explains the admirable effect of faith, because to it it is owing that believers have Christ dwelling in them. In this way, the Lord was pleased, by calling Himself the bread of life, not only to teach that our salvation is treasured up in the faith of His death and resurrection, but also, by virtue of true communication with Him, His life passes into us and becomes ours, just as bread when taken for food gives vigour to the body.' (Book IV. chap. xvii. § 5.)

‘The sum is, that the flesh and blood of Christ feed our souls, just as bread and wine maintain and support our corporeal life. For there would be no aptitude in the sign, did not our souls find their nourishment in Christ. This could not be, did not Christ

truly form one with us, and refresh us by the eating of His flesh, and the drinking of His blood. . . . That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses His life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, He testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which He fulfils what He promises. And truly the thing, there signified He exhibits and offers to all who sit down at that spiritual feast, although it is beneficially received by believers only who receive this great benefit with true faith and heartfelt gratitude.' (Book IV. chap. xvii. § 10.)

Mode of
observ-
ance

'In regard to the external form of the ordinance, whether or not believers are to take into their hands and divide among themselves, or each is to eat what is given to him ; whether they are to return the cup to the deacon or hand it to their neighbour ; whether the bread is to be leavened or unleavened, and the wine to be red or white, is of no consequence. These things are indifferent, and left free to the Church, though it is certain that it was the custom

FREQUENT COMMUNION 71

of the ancient Church for all to receive into their hand. And Christ said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves" (Luke xxii. 17).' (Book IV. chap. xvii. § 43.)

'The sacrament might be celebrated in the most becoming manner, if it were dispensed to the Church very frequently, at least once a week. . . .

Frequency
of observ-
ance

'We ought always to provide that no meeting of the Church is held without the Word, prayer, the dispensation of the Supper, and alms.' (Book IV. chap. xvii. §§ 43 and 44.)

'Most assuredly, the custom which prescribes communion once a year is an invention of the devil, by what instrumentality soever it may have been introduced.' (Book IV. chap. xvii. § 46.)

'The origin of the name of Mass I have never been able certainly to ascertain. It seems probable that it was derived from the offerings which were collected. Hence the ancients usually speak of it in the plural number.' (Book IV. chap. xviii. § 8.)

The Mass
(origin of
the name)

'There never can be a sacrament without a promise of salvation. All men collected

The true
test of a
sacrament

into one cannot, of themselves, give us any promise of salvation, and, therefore, they cannot, of themselves, give out and set up a sacrament.' (Book IV. chap. xviii. § 19.)

'The Word of God must precede, to make a sacrament to be a sacrament, as Augustine most admirably shows (*Hom. in Joann.* 80).' (Book IV. chap. xix. § 2.)

**Confirma-
tion**

'It was anciently customary for the children of Christians, after they had grown up, to appear before the bishop, to fulfil that duty which was required of such adults as presented themselves for baptism. These sat among the catechumens until they were duly instructed in the mysteries of the faith, and could make a confession of it before bishop and people. The infants, therefore, who had been initiated by baptism, not having then given a confession of faith to the Church, were again, toward the end of their boyhood, or on adolescence, brought forward by their parents, and were examined by the bishop in terms of the Catechism which was then in common use. In order that this act, which otherwise justly required to be grave and holy, might have more reverence and dignity, the ceremony of laying on of hands

was also used. Thus the boy, on his faith being approved, was dismissed with a solemn blessing. . . . This laying on of hands, which is done simply by way of benediction, I commend, and would like to see restored to its pure use in the present day.' (Book IV. chap. xix. § 4.)

Then he goes on to combat 'the kind of fictitious confirmation as a divine sacrament.'

A remarkable appreciation of the *Institutes* appeared in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes* in 1900, from the pen of M. Brunetière, the well-known French author and critic, in an article entitled, 'The Literary Work of Calvin.'

M. Brunetière on the *Institutes*

This Roman Catholic writer and member of the French Academy says :—' There is a purely French Reformation which has owed nothing, or little, of its origin to the German or English Reformation. . . . It was not political, like the English, or social, like the German, but religious, theological and moral, and indeed even preceded them both. It was in 1517 that Luther, as we know, posted his theses at Wittenberg, but the Latin commentary on the Psalms by our Lefebvre

of Etaples dates from 1512, and from Lefebvre to Calvin—1512 to 1536—one can trace in French documents the logical progress and evolution of a Protestantism exclusively French.’

Having quoted some passages from the *Institutes*, he continues: ‘Assuredly we have not any other models in our language either of this vivacity of reasoning, or rather of argument, or of this precision and appropriateness of terms, or of this succinct and penetrating brevity. We have no longer this art of “following” one’s thought and not losing sight of it—while explaining or paraphrasing it. The paraphrase of the Decalogue is, in this respect, one of the finest things in the French language.’

Again he says: ‘Like Luther by translating the Bible, so Calvin by translating his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* into his national tongue, established a communication between himself and us and those who shall come after us—a communication, if I may say so, and a contact which shall only be interrupted by the termination of our language itself.’

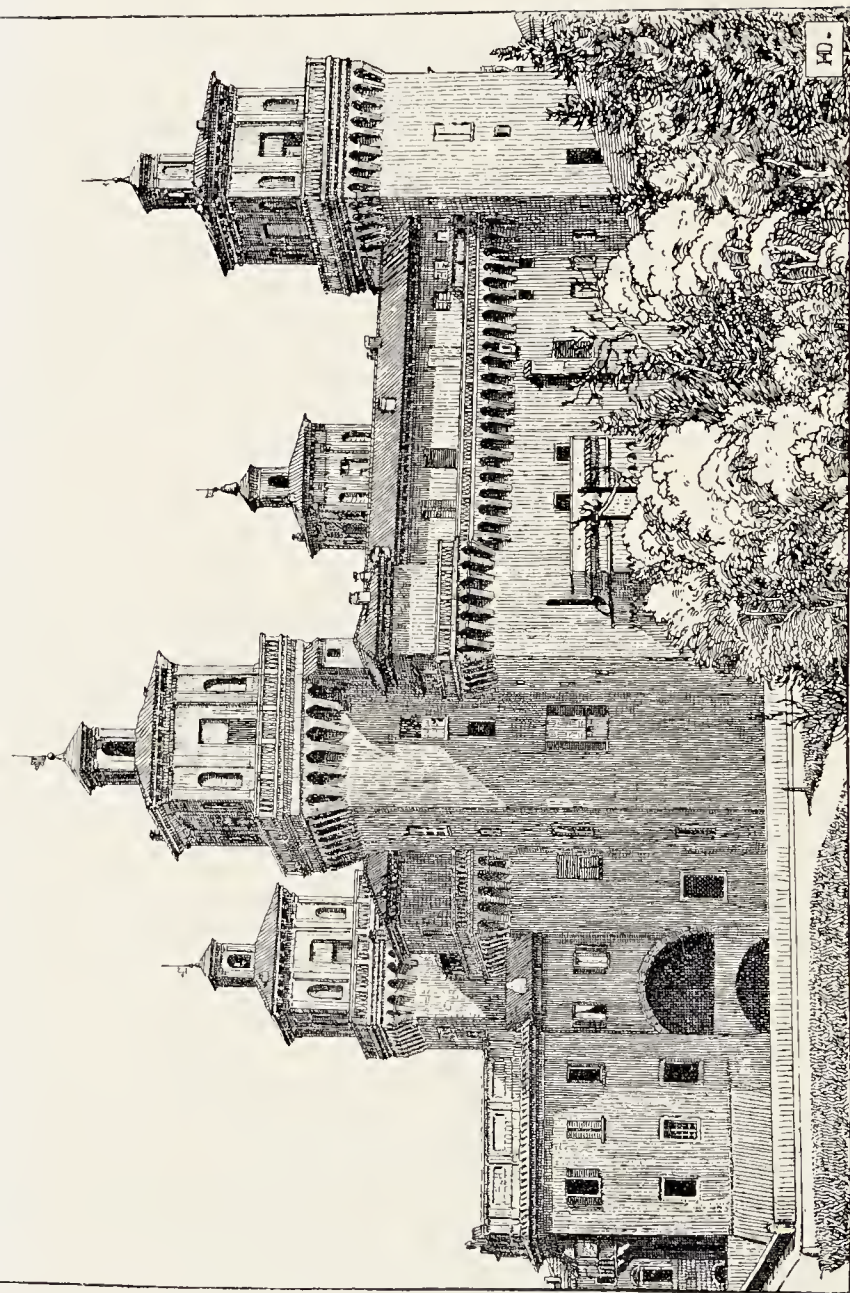
And again he bears this striking testimony:

'The *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is the first of our books which can be called classical. It is equally so, and even more so than the romance or the poetry of Rabelais, by the severity of its composition, by the manner in which the conception of the whole determines the nature and the choice of the details. . . . It is so, finally, because of that "liberality," if I may use the expression, a liberality then quite new, with which Calvin brought to our very door matters which up till then had only been discussed in the schools of the theologians. It is not the less so because of the fame (*retentissement*) which French prose has received from it in the world.'

He further adds that no one contributed more than Calvin to keep back the world in its downward course into paganism, and he thinks that if there must be heresies, that of Calvin has not been entirely useless, even to the Church itself.

It is true that M. Brunetière thinks that Calvin's teaching and code of morals are out of harmony with the genius of the French people, and accuses him, quite baselessly, of anathematizing literature and

art. But the very antipathy he shows to the Reformer on these grounds renders his appreciation of his literary work all the more remarkable.



CASTLE OF FERRARA.

CHAPTER VI

CALVIN COMES TO GENEVA

CALVIN went to Ferrara, Italy, in February 1536. There he was the guest of Rênée de France, wife of Hercules d'Este and Duchess of Ferrara. There, too, he met Clément Marot, who became secretary to the duchess. The atmosphere of that city was then favourable to religious freedom. Its university chairs were held by liberal-minded scholars. From Ferrara Calvin wrote many letters attacking vigorously the errors of the Church of Rome. But the duke was less disposed towards reform than the duchess. The Inquisition, under his auspices, began to arrest Protestants and put them to the torture. Calvin thought it wiser to take his departure, and left about the end of April.

From there he passed through the Vale of Aosta. A cross erected in the town of

Aosta commemorates his flight. In July he reached Geneva.

State of
morals at
Geneva

The condition of Geneva, before his coming, was one of scandalous immorality. The bishops and priests were no exception. In 1513 the Pope, Leo X., had appointed as bishop, contrary to the wishes of the Chapter, 'the bastard' John of Savoy, son of Bishop François and a common courtesan. Even a historian like Kampschulte, the Old Catholic professor at Bonn, not too favourable to Calvin, admits the evil morals of the ecclesiastics. Doumergue has conclusively proved from the registers of the Council of Geneva, especially of July 12, 1527, that the priests of the Madeleine kept houses of prostitution, and others frequented houses of ill-fame.

Reform
movement
before
Calvin's
arrival

The Reformed faith had been already preached at Geneva, first, by Lambert of Avignon in 1522. The first observance of the Lord's Supper in the Protestant form was held by Guérin Muète in 1533.

Exciting events soon took place. The Reformed faith was making such headway by the labours of Froment, Canus, and

others, that the Council tried to check its progress. They invited a Dominican, Guy Furbity, a doctor of the Sorbonne, to preach during Advent 1533. His language was most violent. He accused the Lutherans of being bestial, sensual, ambitious, homicides, and thieves. In a sermon on the 2nd December, he asked in closing, 'Where are our fireside preachers [*prescheurs de cheminées*] who preach the contrary? Let them now come forward, and we will talk to them. Ha! Ha! They will take good care not to show themselves at present, unless at the fire-places, to deceive poor women and those who do not know anything!'

Froment was in the congregation, and when the sermon was finished he cried out, 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, hear what I have to say to you.' The people kept silence, and he went on: 'Gentlemen, I give my life, and I shall give myself to the fire, in order to prove that all this man has said is but lying, and words of Antichrist.' A tumult arose. They cried out, 'To the flames! to the flames!' He escaped. The Council hastened to banish Froment and Canus from the town. But they ordered

Furbity not to preach except in conformity with the Gospel.

The Council of Bern (now Protestant) took the matter up. They wrote letters to the Council of Geneva, saying that they regarded as personal the insults which Furbity had offered to the Germans, and that they would take criminal proceedings against him. They demanded his arrest. Four ambassadors from Bern came to Geneva to see the matter through.

Arrest of
Furbity

Furbity was arrested, and brought before the Council. They gave him the opportunity of proving his case from Holy Scripture. At first he challenged their right to try him, but then yielded. There ensued a discussion between him and the preachers, which lasted several days.

Finally he declared himself ready to do whatever it might please the Council to order. He only asked permission to occupy the pulpit once more. He promised to retract the things which he had said, and then to leave Geneva for ever.

Accordingly on February 15, 1534, he commenced to preach. Then there arose a



PORTE DE LA TREILLE, GENEVA.



TOWN HALL, GENEVA.

cry that he should carry out the sentence which had been pronounced; but he would do nothing. He was removed to prison—or rather kept in a nice house and well-treated, though guarded.

The Protestant cause grew stronger and stronger. On Sunday, March 1, 1534, no sooner had the Franciscan, Coutelier, finished his sermon than, led by Baudichon, Perrin, and Farel, the people entered the convent of Rive. The bells rang, and amid applause Farel preached for the first time at Geneva, in the large hall of the convent, capable of holding four or five thousand persons.

Priests and monks began to abandon the Church. Some of them married. On this latter point, Froment says: 'Women and several men thought it very strange at first that priests, monks, and nuns should marry and have lawful wives and husbands. But they did not marvel in Geneva when they kept mistresses, so much was that the ancient and frequent custom.'

In the summer of 1534 the Bishop Pierre de la Baume, ally of the Duke of Savoy, made war upon his old town. This only

attached the Council the more to the Protestant side. Farel and his companions worked on the ramparts and inflamed the courage of the citizens.

At the end of 1534 the position was this. The Council of Geneva still recognised episcopal authority. Only a third of the population had decided for Protestantism. But the attacks of the troops of the duke and the bishop only served to ally the Council more with the Bernese.

Attempt
to poison
Protestant
preachers

The Roman Catholics made an attempt, through a cook, to poison the Protestant preachers. She had prepared some soup for Farel, Viret, and Froment. Farel did not feel inclined for any. Froment was called away suddenly by a message. Viret alone partook of it, and was taken ill. The woman, having hid in the grotto of a canon, was arrested, tried, and executed.

A public discussion between Farel and two Dominicans, Chappuis and Caroli, took place in 1535. It lasted from May 30 to June 24. It was held by authority of the Council, which named eight commissioners, half of whom were Roman Catholics, and four secretaries, and it took



WILLIAM FAREL.

place in the great hall of the convent of Rive.

On the 8th of August the people carried Farel to the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre, and insisted on his preaching, for the first time, in its pulpit. On the same day and the day following, the people pulled down the images in the cathedral, and in the churches of St Gervais, the Dominicans, and the Augustinians. On the 10th of August, Farel preached before the Council.

Farel
preaches
in the
Cathedral,
1535

A few days afterwards the priests were forbidden to say mass in Geneva until further orders. Thus the mass was abolished in Geneva.

The Mass
abolished
in Geneva

‘The Roman Catholics,’ says Doumergue, ‘speak of the profanations and vandalism of the scenes which occurred at the downfall of Catholicism. They are right. But they forget to tell of the discoveries brought to light in the wreck—the tricks to make the dead bodies of the saints sing, during all the nights of Christmas-time, by means of the wind passing through tubes. An alleged brain of St Peter, venerated for centuries, was

discovered to be a common piece of pumice-stone.'

On December 4, 1535, the Council of Two Hundred decreed that the coins should henceforth bear the new device, *Post tenebras lucem* [*spero*]. This was shortly afterwards changed into, *Post tenebras lux*. It was then no longer a hope, but a reality.

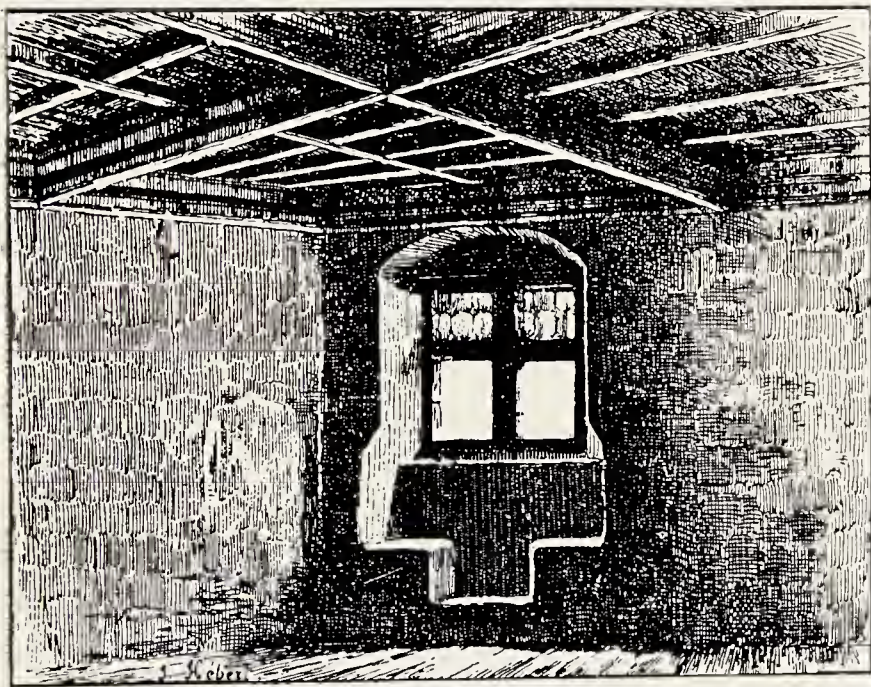
Yet all this time Geneva was being threatened and attacked from time to time by the soldiery of the duke and the bishop.

The Re-
formation
officially
accepted
May 21,
1536

On Sunday, May 21, 1536, the Reformation was officially accepted by the people assembled in General Council. The question was put by the Council of Two Hundred whether any one wished to say anything 'against the word and doctrine which has been preached to us in this city,' and whether all wished to live according to the Gospel and Word of God. Without a dissentient voice, this was agreed to, and with uplifted hands all swore by the help of God to live according to this evangelical



GENEVA, WITH MONT BLANC IN THE DISTANCE.



WINDOW OF COUNCIL CHAMBER IN BISHOP'S HOUSE, GENEVA.

FAREL PERSUADES CALVIN 85

law, 'abandoning all masses and other papal ceremonies and deceptions, images and idols.'

On the same day, free and compulsory education was proclaimed.

In July 1536 Calvin, as we have said, arrived at Geneva. He was on his way to Strassburg. But Farel, hearing that he was in Geneva, hastened to see him, and besought him to remain and help him in the organization of the Church. Calvin at first shrank from this, pleading his other plans, his desires, his tastes. Then Farel said sternly, 'You give your studies as an excuse, but if you refuse to give yourself here with us to this work of the Lord, God will curse you, for you seek your own interests rather than those of Christ.'

Then Calvin yielded. At first he began by giving expositions of Scripture in the church of Saint Pierre. The Council, soon after, approved of the appointment.

In October 1536 was held the famous discussion in the Cathedral at Lausanne between Farel, Viret, and Calvin on the one Mass abolished at Lausanne

hand, and representatives of the Church of Rome on the other, which resulted in the abolition of the mass and images there by the vote of the Council.

But Calvin's first ministry at Geneva was of short duration. It lasted less than two years. In that brief period, however, he laid the foundation of much that was to follow. It was the period of Church organization, of the Articles, the Catechism, and the Confession of Faith.



FAREL ADJURING CALVIN TO REMAIN AT GENEVA.

From the painting by J. L. Lugardon.

CHAPTER VII

AN EXILE IN STRASSBURG

WHEN we speak of Calvin as an exile, our thoughts instinctively turn to other illustrious exiles of history.

We think of Dante, exiled from the city ^{Dante} which he helped to make great and famous, wandering from province to province, from city to city, from court to court, 'tossed about,' to use his own words, 'like a ship without sail or rudder, driven through every port, harbour and shore, by the bleak wind of grievous poverty.' Well for him that he was able to find refuge in his own conscience,

'Sotto l' usbergo del sentirsi puro.' .

And from that exile there came the greater part of the *Divina Commedia*. But Dante never returned to Florence, and though his monument may be seen there to-day in Santa Croce, his grave is at Ravenna.

John Knox We think too of another exile under greyer skies than those of Italy. 'Many years ago,' says Froude, 'when I was first studying the history of the Reformation in Scotland, I read a story of a slave in a French galley who was one morning bending wearily over his oar. The day was breaking, and, rising out of the grey waters, a line of cliffs was visible, and the white houses of a town and a church tower. The rower was a man unused to such service, worn with toil and watching, and likely, it was thought, to die.' That town was St Andrews, that galley-slave was John Knox. Unlike Dante, Knox had not actually been banished by his own countrymen, but by the French besiegers of the Scottish fortress. But Knox, during his nineteen months on the galleys, tasted even more deeply than Dante the dregs of the cup of suffering. 'What torment I sustained in the galleys,' he says himself, 'and what were the sobs of my heart, is now no time to recite.' Unlike Dante again, Knox returned from his banishment.

Napoleon In more modern times the lonely figure of Napoleon at St Helena arises before us, eating out his heart in that remote island of

the ocean. In his case the tragedy was greater than in that of either of the two just mentioned, and the contrast more vast between his former power, splendour, ambition, and the narrow cage against whose bars his proud spirit chafed in vain.

The Hungarian patriot, Kossuth, was an **Kossuth** exile too, but his banishment became a triumphal march through England, where he found an enthusiastic welcome.

Dante was banished because he tried to deliver Florence from the tyranny of faction ; Knox because he was the foe of the Papacy ; Napoleon was exiled because his freedom was a menace to the freedom of the nations ; Kossuth by the Austrians, from whose oppressions he sought to emancipate his country.

Calvin's exile from Geneva, less tragic than that of Napoleon, was as pathetic in its personal circumstances as any of the others, and it was banishment in the cause of spiritual independence and moral reformation.

It came about in this wise.

Soon after Calvin's coming to Geneva in 1536, he began the work of ecclesiastical

The
Council
opposes
Calvin

organization and moral and social reform, of which we give a detailed account in chapter ix. Such reforms, accepted and enforced by the civil authorities, soon began to excite opposition. This opposition steadily increased, and in course of time extended to the Council itself. In 1538 the Council came to two decisions, which struck at the heart of Calvin's teaching and reforms. It resolved that 'the Lord's Supper should be refused to no one.' This, obviously, was an end to all ecclesiastical discipline. And it further decreed, in opposition to the Geneva pastors, that the mode of observing the Lord's Supper itself should be that adopted in Bern. This was to override all spiritual independence.

The reference to Bern requires a little explanation. As is shown fully by Heiz, in the *Protestantische Kirchenzeitung*, 1886 (pp. 1173-1184), in an article on Calvin's banishment from Geneva, there was considerable difference in detail between the Reformed Church of Bern and that of Geneva. Two of the differences were that in Bern the font was used in baptism, and unleavened bread in the Holy Communion.

Now, Calvin was not the man to make

FORBIDDEN TO PREACH 91

strife about modes of observing the Lord's Supper, provided no essential principle was violated. In the preface to his Latin Catechism, published in that very year, he denounces the pedantry of those who insist on 'exact conformity in ceremonies,' and he pronounces it 'unworthy of us to introduce a servile and unedifying conformity into matters where the Lord has left us free to use our liberty, for the much greater advantage of edification.' And in a subsequent letter from Strassburg to the city of Geneva he advises it to admit the use of unleavened bread.

But it was a very different matter when this use was imposed upon him by an external authority. Then, he felt, he must assert his Christian liberty and the liberty of the Church.

Calvin, supported by his colleagues, refused to submit to the decree of the Two Hundred. The Communion was to be administered on Easter Sunday. Calvin's refusal being known, he and his colleagues were forbidden to preach. But, notwithstanding this prohibition, Calvin and Farel both preached in the churches of Saint Pierre and Saint Gervais respectively. They

Calvin
refuses
to submit

stated publicly that they must decline to administer the Lord's Supper, not because of the unleavened bread, which was 'a thing of indifference,' but because 'it would be to profane so holy a mystery until the people were better disposed,' and then they referred to the disorders and abominations prevalent in the city.

Com-
manded
to leave
the city

The Council of Two Hundred met the following day. Calvin and Farel attended to defend themselves, but were not permitted to enter, and on the 23rd of April they were commanded to leave the city within three days (in the quaint words of the Register of the Council, *qu'il doyjen vuyder laz ville dans troys jour prochain*).

The Register of the Council also records their memorable answer. 'Very well! If we had been the servants of men, we would have been badly recompensed, but we serve a great Master, who will reward us.' They left the city immediately.

A remarkable glimpse of how Calvin was regarded by outsiders during the struggles preceding his banishment is given by Doumergue, who quotes from a letter written to Calvin in March 1538 by two English travellers, John Butler and

Bartholomew Trehern. These two men, after having resided four months at Geneva and having come under the influence of the Reformer, write to him to express the regard with which his gentleness of character (*tanta ingenii suavitas*) and his charm of conversation (*tanta colloquiorum dulcedo*) had inspired them. They address him as *suavissime doctissimeque Calvine* (most gentle and learned). And they express their sympathy with him in the treatment he had received from wicked men.

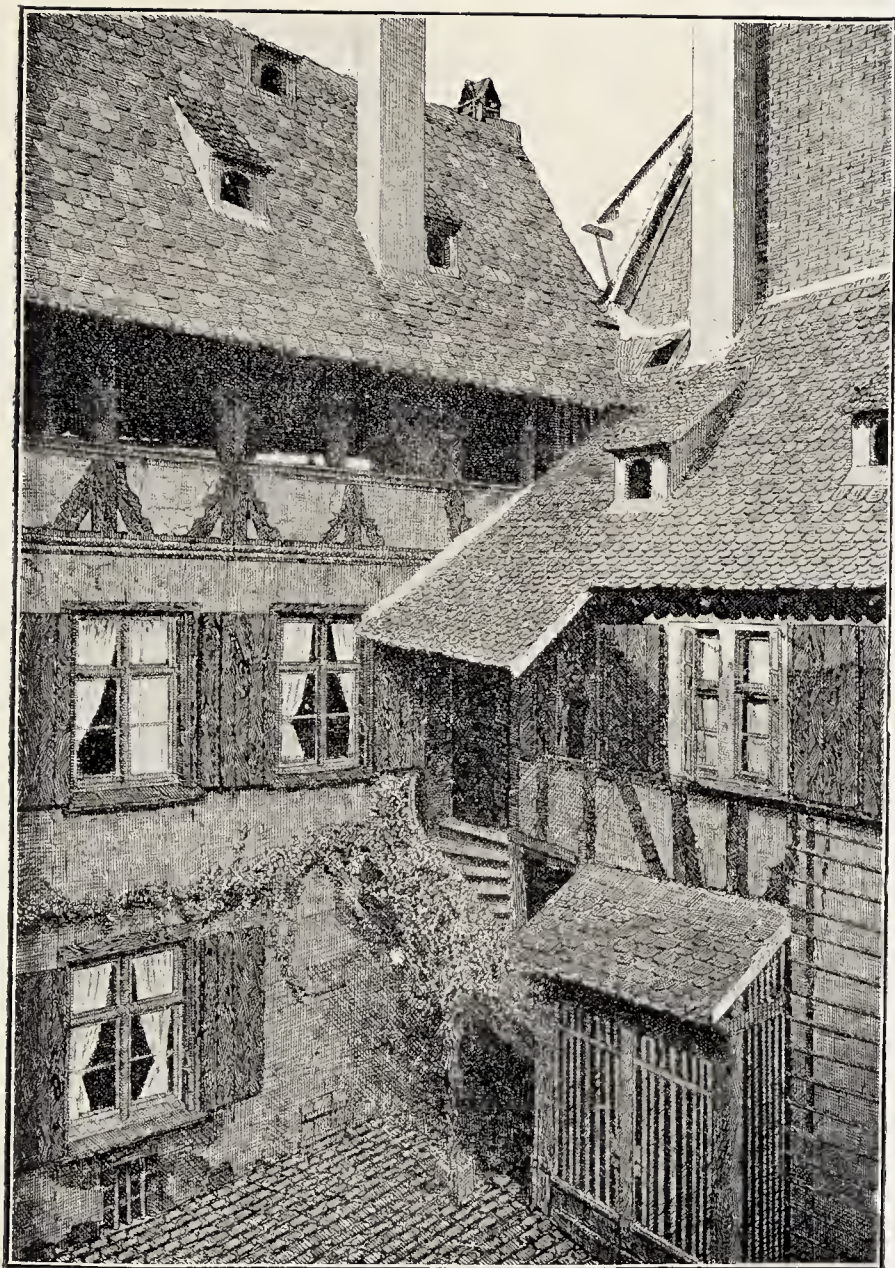
Two Englishmen
on Calvin

For four months he moved about from place to place in Switzerland. His own feelings at this time may be best judged from his letter to his friend Louis du Tillet, July 10, 1538. He has, on the one hand, a sense of relief at being free from the cares and anxieties which accompanied his work at Geneva, and yet he wishes to be guided by the Divine will. 'On looking back,' he says, 'and considering the perplexities which environed me from the time when I first went thither, there is nothing I dread more than returning to the charge from which I have been set free. For while, when first I entered upon it, I could discern the calling of God, which held

me fast bound, with which I consoled myself, now, on the contrary, I am in fear lest I tempt Him if I resume so great a burden, which has been already felt to be insupportable. . . . Nevertheless, I know assuredly that our Lord will guide me in that so very doubtful a deliberation, the more so because I shall look rather to what He will point out to me than to my own judgment, which beyond measure drawing me contrariwise, I feel ought to be suspected.'

Like Dante, he had the consolation of his conscience, *l'usbergo del sentirsi puro*. Writing to the Church of Geneva, October 1, 1538, he says:—'God is our witness, and your own consciences before His judgment-seat, that while we had our conversation among you, our whole study has been to keep you together in happy union and concord of agreement.' Thus he indicates what his life amongst them had been. In the same letter he shows how opposed he is to all vindictiveness for personal wrongs.

'If we set ourselves to do battle with men,' he says, 'thinking only to wreak our vengeance upon them, and so to have satis-



MARTIN BUCER'S HOUSE, STRASSBURG.

faction for the wrongs which they have done to us, it may well be doubted whether we would ever conquer, so long as we entertained such views. Nay, it is a certain fact, that by following that method we ourselves shall be vanquished by the devil. On the other hand, if, avoiding all conflict with men, except only in so far as we are constrained to have them opposed to us, inasmuch as *they* are the adversaries of Jesus Christ, we *do* resist the wiles of our spiritual enemy, being furnished with the armour wherewith the Lord would have His people to be guided and strengthened ; there need be no fear about our getting the upper hand. Wherefore, my brethren, if you seek true victory, do not oppose evil by evil of a like kind, but laying aside all evil affections, be guided solely by your zeal for the service of God, moderated by His Spirit, according to the rule of His Word.' This letter breathes the spirit of Christian restraint and prudence, and at the same time of adherence to duty.

Bucer, an ex-Dominican and friend of Luther, was then the leader of the Reformed party at Strassburg. In that German town there was a small French colony of Protestant refugees, which began about the

Absence of
Vindictiveness

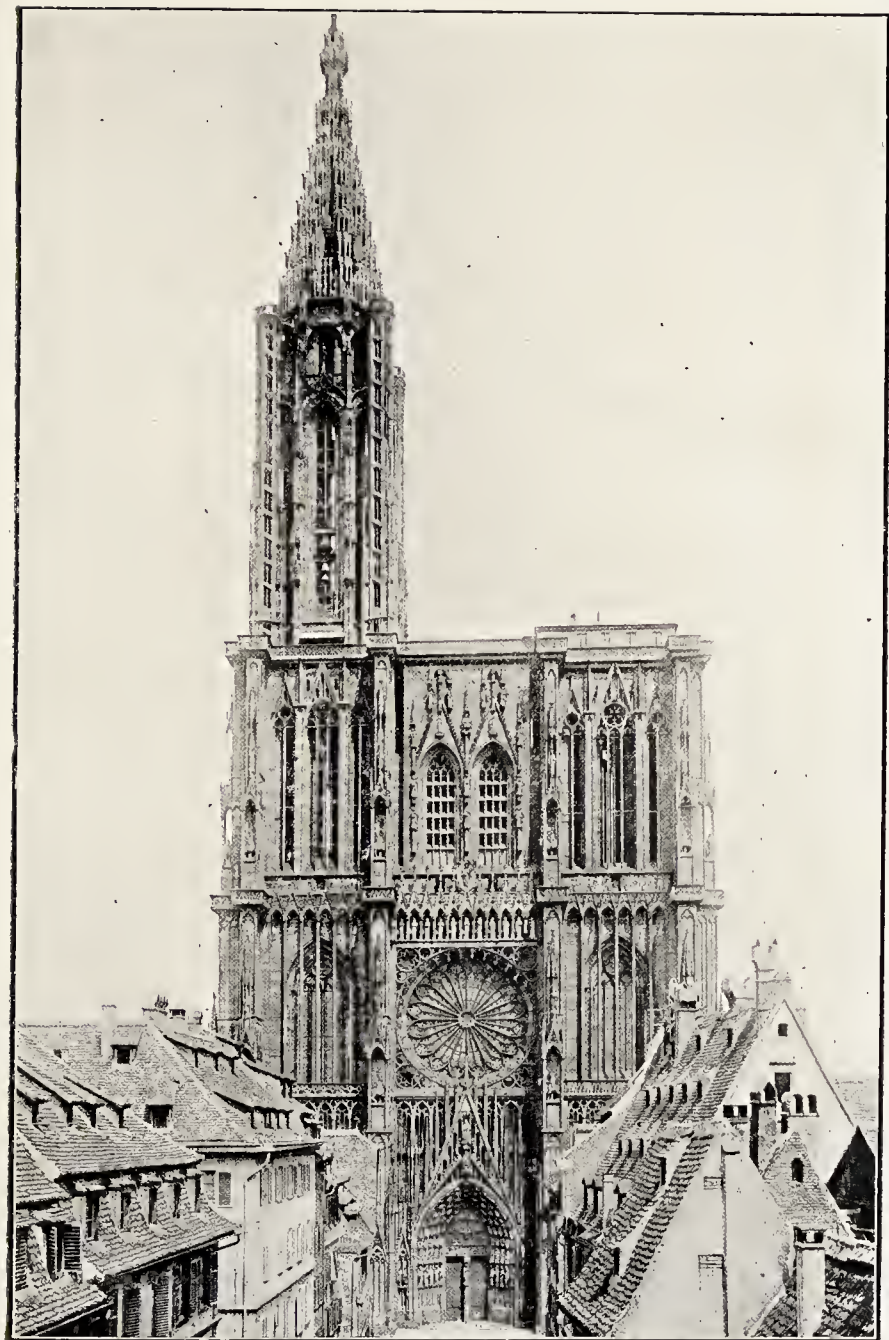
Martin
Bucer

year 1524, but which had as yet no settled pastor. Hearing of Calvin's banishment, Bucer set himself to obtain his services for the French congregation. In July he wrote to him, urging him to come there. He would have, he said, but a small flock, but he might hope to exercise a very fruitful ministry.

The invitation
to Strass-
burg

But Calvin hesitated. In August he wrote to Farel: 'I suspect that Bucer will press me more strongly to go to Strassburg. I shall not fall in with this unless I am compelled by a greater necessity.' But the necessity of a stronger will than even Bucer's was laid upon him. In the Preface to his *Commentary on the Psalms* he says: 'Being at liberty and released from my office, I had thought of living in peace without taking any public charge, until Martin Bucer, using a remonstrance and protestation like those which Farel had used before, recalled me to another place. Being then terrified by the example of Jonah, which he held up to me, I continued still in the office of teacher.'

In September 1538 he preached his first sermon in Strassburg, and he laboured there until 1541. His exile was not one of



STRASSBURG CATHEDRAL

enforced idleness and solitude, but of ceaseless activity.

From the first he took an honoured position in the German city. In less than a year he became a citizen, and was enrolled in the Tailors' Company, just as in London to-day men are Clothworkers, Fishmongers, Ironmongers, who have no connexion with those trades.

His office as minister of the French Church was held under the council of the city. His scholarship was held in such high repute that he was also appointed as lecturer in divinity in the academy, the university of that time, already famous by the labours of men like Sturm. It was then that he began those Biblical expositions which laid the foundation of his Commentaries.

Of Calvin's work as a commentator, perhaps the best estimate is that of Tholuck.

'Calvin,' says the great German professor, 'was not only skilful and happy in his exposition of the grammatical sense, in his correct remarks on particular expressions, and in his characteristic views, but also in his inquiries carried beyond the grammatical into the historical, poetical, and prophetic sense of important passages. . . .

Lecturer
in Divinity

Tholuck
on Calvin's
Commen-
taries

'In his commentary on the New Testament we cannot but admire his simple, elegant style, his dogmatic freedom, the tact with which he treats his subject, his multifarious learning and profound Christian piety. Corresponding to the form is the elegance of the diction; a neatness and propriety of expression, especially apparent in the prefaces. But this elegance is not discovered in an affected selection of words. . . .

'Another excellence in Calvin is his care not to fall into digressions. The Lutheran commentators were engaged rather in explaining particular heads of doctrine (*loci communes*) than in writing connected commentaries. Thus we often miss, in Melancthon, for example, the explanation of difficult passages immediately before us, while he dilates at great length on others which afford him the opportunity of dogmatic expositions. Calvin himself even was not altogether free from the habit of his time, and often breaks out into violent declamation against the pope and the monks; but he does this much less frequently than his contemporaries, and such a species of polemics in a time like his was not to be condemned.

‘Calvin was far from following the error of Luther, who, neglecting the basis of historical testimony, supplied its place by mere subjective opinion, and hence brought the genuineness of Scripture itself into dispute. As little disposed was he to sympathise with those who anxiously defended the apostolic origin of writings to which the testimony of history is clearly opposed. He guards himself, however, with the greatest moderation, where the larger number of historical authorities is on the other side, against a rash opposition. Thus he says in his argument to the Second Epistle of Peter, “Even though in all parts of the Epistle the Majesty of the Spirit of Christ may be clearly seen, I regard it as a matter of religion utterly to reject every phrase which cannot be recognised as the genuine expression of Peter.” On the Epistle to the Hebrews he says, “I must not be quoted as among those who consider Paul the author of this Epistle.” He adds his reasons with critical and philosophical acuteness.’

But his work as pastor and professor was never lucrative. He was indeed so pressed by poverty, as his letters to Farel show,

His
poverty

that more than once he had to sell his books. His actual salary was a florin a week (about five francs and a half). It was therefore necessary for him to take boarders. But as these pensioners were themselves poor students, Calvin's income was not thereby greatly increased.

His
marriage

It was during his residence in Strassburg that, at the age of thirty-one, he married. His wife was Idelette de Bure, a native of Liège, whose family had been banished from Belgium in 1533 for their adherence to the Protestant faith, and who was herself the widow of Jean Stordeur, another Belgian refugee. But Calvin's married life lasted less than nine years. His only son lived but a few days, and his wife died in March 1549.

Bonnet (*Récits du XVII^e Siècle*) speaks of Madame Calvin as a true helper of her husband. She visited the poor, consoled the afflicted, received the numerous strangers who knocked at the door of the Reformer, sustained him in hours of discouragement and sadness. In a letter to Viret, written after her death, Calvin himself said of her : 'My sorrow is no common one. I have lost the excellent companion of my life

(*optima sociæ vitæ*), who, if misfortune had come upon us, would have gladly shared with me, not merely exile and wretchedness, but death itself. While she lived, she was the faithful helper of my ministry. Never did I experience from her the least hindrance.'

It was during the Strassburg period that Calvin first made at Frankfort the acquaintance of Melanchthon, an acquaintance which afterwards ripened into a close friendship. They sometimes differed, but they held one another in true affection. To Melanchthon, Calvin dedicated his *Commentary on Daniel*. Melanchthon died in 1560. And Calvin, in an apostrophe in his work on the Lord's Supper (1561), thus writes: 'O Philip Melanchthon, to thee I address myself, to thee who art now living in the presence of God with Jesus Christ, and there awaitest us, till death shall unite us in the enjoyment of that divine peace. A hundred times hast thou said to me, when, weary with so much labour and oppressed with so many burdens, thou laidest thy head upon my breast, "God grant, God grant that I may now die!" But I, on my side, have also a thousand times wished that we had the happiness to live together.'

Friend-
ship with
Melanch-
thon

Luther's
message
to Calvin

In his correspondence with Farel at this period we get a pleasing reference to one of the rare occasions in which Luther and Calvin exchanged courtesies. In his letter to Farel, November 20, 1539, Calvin says : — ‘Crato, one of our engravers, lately returned from Wittenberg, who brought a letter from Luther, in which there was written, “Salute for me reverently Sturm and Calvin, whose books I have read with special delight.” Now consider seriously what I have said there about the Eucharist ; think of the ingenuousness of Luther ; it will now be easy for you to see how unreasonable are those who obstinately dissent from him. Philip [Melanchthon], however, wrote thus, “Luther and Pomeranus have desired Calvin to be greeted ; Calvin has acquired great favour in their eyes !” Philip has informed me at the same time by the messenger, that certain persons, in order to imitate Luther, have shown him a passage in which he and his friends have been criticised by me. That thereupon he had examined the passage, and feeling that it was undoubtedly intended for him, had said at length ; “I hope that Calvin will one day think better of us ; but in any event it is well that he

should even now have a proof of our good feeling towards him.”’

Calvin was responsive to such approaches. He adds: ‘If we are not affected by such moderation, we are certainly of stone. For my part, I am profoundly affected by it, and therefore have taken occasion to say so in the preface which is inserted before the Epistle to the Romans.’

If Calvinist and Lutheran kept apart, the fault lay not with the leaders. Great men can afford to shake hands over their differences.

But Calvin was not to remain in exile. Geneva could not do without its greatest man. His banishment had been followed by fresh outbreaks of moral disorder in the city. Factions increased both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

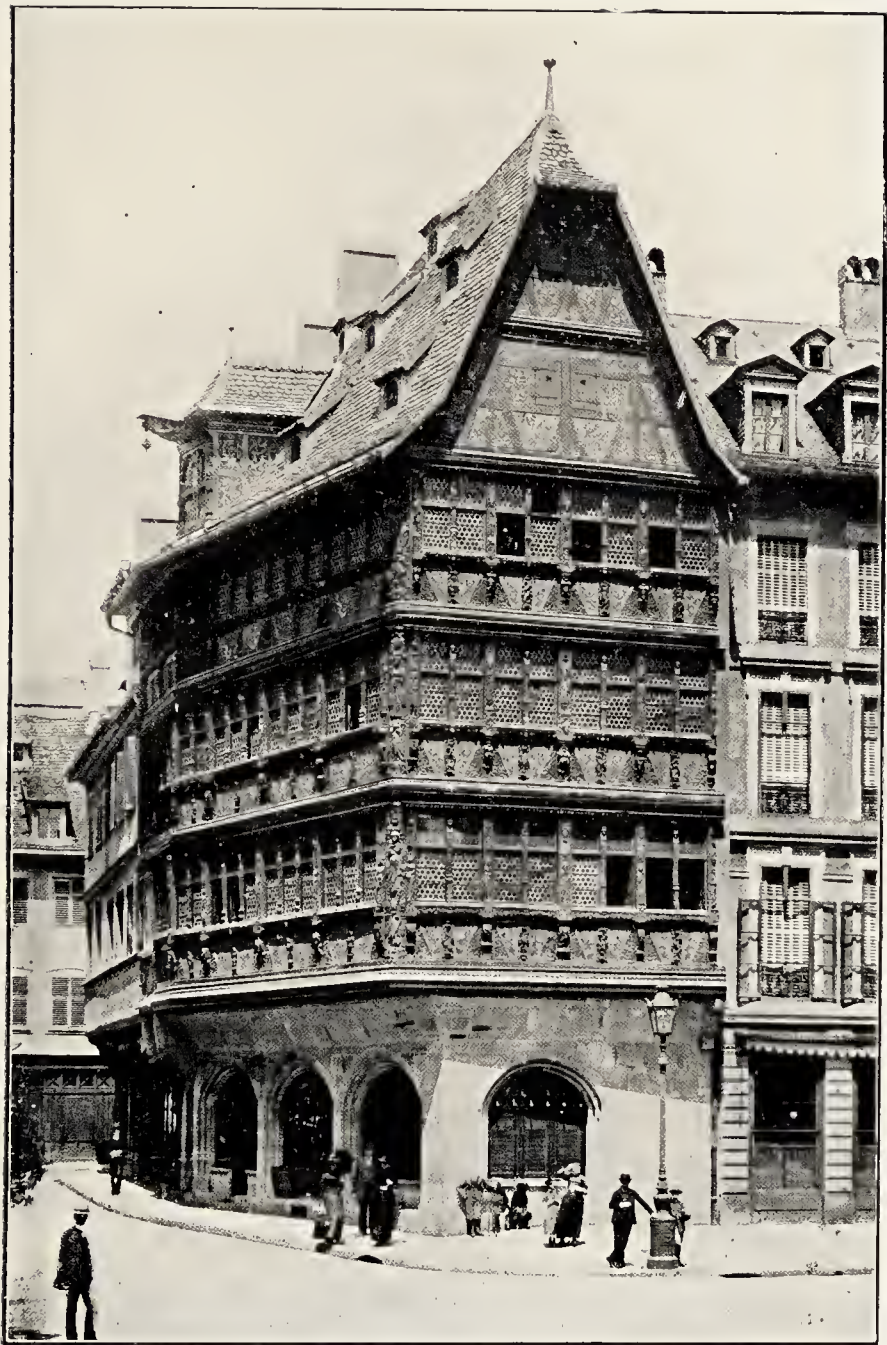
Geneva
without
Calvin

More than once efforts had been made to induce him to return. But he shrank from the task. On the one hand, he wished well to Geneva. He would gladly help her Church and people. But he felt that the Church at Strassburg had strong claims upon him.

In a letter to the Syndics and Council of Geneva, October 23, 1540, in reply to

overtures from them, he says : ' I am in singular perplexity, having the desire to meet your wish, and to wrestle, with all the grace that God has given me to get her [the Church] brought back into a better condition, while, on the other hand, I cannot slightly quit the charge or lay it down lightly, to which the Lord has called me, without being relieved of it by regular and lawful means. For so I have always believed and taught, and to the present moment cannot persuade myself to the contrary, that when our Lord appoints a man as pastor in a church to teach in His Word, he ought to consider himself as engaged to take upon himself the government of it, so that he may not lightly withdraw from it without the settled assurance in his own heart, and the testimony of the faithful, that the Lord has discharged him.'

And the sufferings and ill-treatment of the past had left their mark upon his soul. To Viret he wrote : ' I could not read one part of your letter without laughing. It is that in which you exhibit so much care for my prosperity. Shall I go then to Geneva to secure my peace? Why not rather submit to be crucified? It would be better to



KAMMERZELL HOUSE, STRASSBURG.

This beautiful old House, one of the sights of Strassburg, was built about 1467, but only the lower portion remains. The upper part was built in 1589. It is the oldest building in the town, and after changing hands several times was acquired by the society for Women's Work, which is still in possession of the building.

perish at once than to be tormented to death in that chamber of torture. If you indeed wish my welfare, dear Viret, pray cease from such advice as this.'

The same inward shudder is evident in his letter to Farel, October 21, 1540. 'As often as I think how unhappy I was at Geneva, I tremble in my innermost being when mention is made of my return. . . . I must pray you to forgive me, if I dread that place as destructive of peace and safety.' It was in a subsequent letter, October 24, that he used the famous phrase, *Cor meum velut mactatum Domino in sacrificium offero*. (See below, p. 108.)

After months of anxious consideration, pressure from Geneva, and consultation with his wisest friends, he became more resigned to what seemed to him to be the call of God.

The Council General of Geneva left nothing undone on its part to show its regret for the past and its desire for his return. On May 1, 1541, it revoked the sentence of banishment pronounced in 1538 against the ministers and their friends. All the members held up their hands for a declaration that they regarded them as good

Banish-
ment
revoked

men (*pour gens de bien et de Dieu*), and that they might go and come in safety.

Returns to
Geneva

On September 13, 1541, Calvin returned to Geneva. On the same day he appeared before the Council, and presented his letters of commendation from the city and preachers of Strassburg. Strassburg, on its part, had shown its sorrow at parting with him, and gave a very substantial evidence of its esteem. It allowed him to retain his citizenship, and voted the continuance of his stipend. But the latter he declined to accept.

The Geneva Council at once provided him with a house and garden, and voted him a stipend of 500 florins a year. This sum is estimated by Doumergue to be equivalent to from 3000 to 3500 francs (£120 to £140). Probably at no time did his income, apart from house and garden, exceed £160 of our money.

The main features of Calvin's life and work at Geneva are dealt with in the succeeding chapters. Until the present year little was done beyond a tablet in the cathedral where he so often preached, to commemorate his memory in the city which, more than any other man, he made

illustrious. He died on May 27, 1564, before the completion of his fifty-fifth year. His supposed grave in the Plain-Palais Cemetery at Geneva bears, like Knox's grave in Parliament Square, Edinburgh, only the initials of his name. But ‘J. C.’ has other monuments, more enduring than brass or marble, in the lives he influenced and the principles which he taught.

CHAPTER VIII

CALVIN'S CHARACTER AND LIFE

His faith CALVIN was a man of faith. He lived under the power of things unseen. Very early in life he took as his crest a hand holding out a burning heart. Beneath it was the motto, *Cor meum velut mactatum Deo in sacrificium offero* (I offer to God my heart, as if slain for a sacrifice).

He does not tell us much about his own spiritual experiences. But in the Preface to his *Commentary on the Psalms* he lifts the veil for a little. Speaking of his turning from the study of law, he says : ' Though I tried to devote myself faithfully to it in order to please my father, yet God at length turned my course in another direction by the secret guiding (*arcano freno*) of His providence. And in the first place, when I was too firmly attached to the superstitions of the Papacy to make it easy to draw me from so deep a slough, by a sudden conver-

sion He reduced to docility my mind, too hardened for my age.' When or how this sudden change took place it is difficult to say. Professor Lefranc, in his book *La Jeunesse de Calvin*, thinks that, though the decision may have been sudden at the end, the conversion was a gradual process. But it is difficult to follow Lefranc in his theory that the environment or family influences at Noyon aided his development toward Protestantism.

The important thing is that, whatever means were used, whatever circumstances aided, Calvin attributed the change to the Divine Spirit working on his heart and conscience. 'Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' His conversion

And all through his life he saw God's guiding hand. Thus he says in the Preface to the Psalms, already quoted, 'I who by nature am of a rustic disposition (*subrusticus*), loved retirement and leisure, and sought seclusion, which indeed was not granted to me, since all my retreats became like public schools. In fine, while this has been my one desire, to cultivate an obscure leisure, God has so guided me by various turnings, that He never let me rest anywhere until,

contrary to my own inclination, I was forced into the light.'

In his coming to Geneva, he was guided, it is true, by Farel's appeal. But above the voice of Farel he heard another voice speaking to him. This also we learn from his Preface to the Psalms. 'I was kept at Geneva not so much by the advice or appeal, as by the terrible adjuration of William Farel, as if God had laid a violent hand upon me from heaven.'

In the *Institutes* (Book III. chap. ii. § 21) he shows us what a power faith has to calm the mind and strengthen the character. 'If the believing soul is driven to and fro in an unusual manner, still will it rise again superior to all its distresses and never suffer itself to be deprived of its trust in the divine mercy. The soul of the believer, far from being finally cast down, will always rise through its anxieties to a higher degree of security. . . . Faith is never wholly rooted out of the heart of a believer. However shaken he may be, and however wavering, yet does he continue planted in the truth. . . . We see the accomplishment of what John says in his canonical epistle, "This is the victory that overcometh the

THE POWER OF PRAYER III

world, even our faith." For he affirms that it will be not only victorious in one or in a few battles, or against some particular assault, but that it will overcome the whole world, though it should be assailed a thousand times.'

And how beautiful are his words about prayer (*Inst.*, Book III. chap. xx. §§ 1, 2): ^{His faith in prayer} 'This indeed is that secret and recondite philosophy which cannot be extracted from syllogisms, but is well understood by those whose eyes God hath opened, that in His light they may see light. . . . By means of prayer we penetrate to those riches which are reserved with our Heavenly Father for our use. For between God and men there is a certain communication, by which they enter into the sanctuary of heaven and in His immediate presence remind Him of His promises, in order that His declarations which they have implicitly believed, may in time of necessity be verified in their experience. . . . It is certainly not without reason that our Heavenly Father declares, that the only fortress of salvation consists in invocation of His name ; by which we call to our aid the presence of His providence, which watches over all our concerns ; of His

power, which supports us when weak and ready to faint ; and of His goodness, which receives us into favour, though miserably burdened with sins ; in which finally we call upon Him to manifest His presence with us in all His attributes. Hence our consciences derive peculiar peace and tranquillity ; for when the affliction which oppressed us is represented to the Lord, we feel abundant composure even from this consideration, that none of our troubles are concealed from Him, whom we know to possess both the greatest readiness and the greatest ability to promote our truest interest.'

The consciousness of God's presence was indeed the supreme influence and dominant force in his life. In his letter to Melanchthon, for instance, he appeals to 'God and the holy angels who see us.' And elsewhere he appeals to Christ as the master of the lists, the witness and the judge, under whose eyes we contend.

His
courage

He was a man of courage. It might be said of him, as of his contemporary and friend John Knox, that he never feared nor flattered any flesh.



CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PIERRE, GENEVA.

He needed all his courage for the ecclesiastical and moral reforms which he sought to effect at Geneva. One of the fundamental principles which he laid down was the purity of Church communion and the necessity of discipline. Naturally this gave offence to people of loose morals and godless life. The party of the libertines invoked the help of the Council, and actually succeeded in carrying a resolution by which that body asserted the right to override the decisions of the consistory, or Church government, in regard to the admission of persons to the Holy Communion. Appeal being taken to the 'Council of Two Hundred,' which was the supreme legislative authority, it was decided that the 'little Council' had the right to interfere in Church discipline and to absolve offenders. The libertines thought they had triumphed. Calvin, they thought, would never dare again to resist the Council.

But they little knew the man they had to contend with. They determined to attend the Church of St Pierre on the first Sunday in September 1553, the day when the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated, and if necessary to take the sacred emblems by force, or compel Calvin to administer them. The

Refuses
the Com-
munion to
the Liber-
tines

eventful day arrived. The church was thronged. Many of those present carried weapons. Calvin ascended the pulpit. He preached on the nature of the sacrament, and the danger of treating it with contempt. He concluded by stating that he would not give the sacrament to anyone who had been excommunicated, and that if anyone should attempt to seize the bread of the Lord by force, he would do so at his peril. Then he came down to the holy table. The libertines pressed forward, as if determined to partake. Placing his hands over the bread and wine, Calvin said: 'You may break these arms, you may take my life, but you will never compel me to defile the table of the Lord, or to give sacred things to the profane.' A hush fell upon the whole congregation. The libertines drew back abashed. And the Holy Supper, as Beza tells us, was celebrated in the profoundest silence and with a holy awe, as if God Himself had been visibly present in the assembly. Calvin had won, and the spiritual independence of the Church was vindicated.

Confronts
the
Council

Or take the scene when he himself in 1547 confronted the Council of Two



CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PIERRE, GENEVA (INTERIOR).

Hundred. Feeling had then been running high about the laws for the enforcement of public morals. The Council itself was sharply divided. Calvin, of course, was fiercely abused by those who were opposed to his policy. The Council met on December 16. Word was brought to him that sharp contention had arisen at the meeting, and that threats of violence had been uttered. The streets were filled with excited throngs. He said that he would himself attend the Council. His friends remonstrated, but in vain. He passed through the streets to the council chamber, at the doors of which, as he tells us in his letter to Viret, a tumultuous assembly was gathered. 'Fearful,' he says, 'was the sight. I cast myself into the thickest of the crowd. I was pulled to and fro by those who wished to save me from harm. I called God to witness that I was come to offer myself to their swords, if they thirsted for blood.' In his farewell words to the ministers of Geneva, just before his death, he refers to this incident, and says that when he entered the Council they said to him, 'Sir, withdraw, it is not with you we have to do;' and that he answered, 'No, I shall not! Go on, rascals, kill me, and my

blood will witness against you, and even these benches shall require it.' He indeed could truly say, 'The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?'

Calvin and
the Plague

In 1542 there was an outbreak of the plague. The plague-hospital was full. A chaplain was required. The Protestant minister Pierre Blanchet offered himself, and was accepted by the Council. After a short time the plague ceased, and Blanchet left the hospital.

The plague broke out again in 1543. On May 1, Calvin announced to the Council that Castellion, a minister, was ready to go as chaplain to the hospital. The Council accepted his offer, at the same time censuring some ministers who were unwilling to go to the hospital. This was on May 2, but on the 11th Castellion was superseded and Blanchet reappointed. Blanchet, however, died, and on June 1 the Council ordered the ministers to meet and choose a chaplain, 'Mr Calvin being excluded, because he was required for the Church.'

The following week a chaplain was appointed.

Doumergue says we can understand that the Council did not wish to expose Calvin to the risk of infection in the hospital. The general who commands is not placed in the front rank of the battle. But if Calvin had been called, what would he have done? Doumergue's answer is that he would have simply done his duty.

He quotes from a letter written by Calvin to Viret in October 1542, at the beginning of the plague. 'If anything happens [to Blanchet], I fear that after him it will be my turn to run the risk. . . . We cannot fail those who need our ministry more than others. . . . As long as we are in this charge, I do not see how we could excuse ourselves if, through fear of danger, we deprive of help those who need it most.'

Doumergue devotes a good deal of space to this whole incident, because Roman Catholic authors have quoted Calvin's expression of fear without his expression of sense of duty. He points out that Calvin's letter, written to a friend, is quite frank. He does not pretend to despise the danger. But if duty requires, he is willing to face it.

His un-
selfishness

He was also an unselfish man. Earthly riches he never sought after. In Strassburg, where, as we have seen, he was lecturer in the academy as well as minister of the French congregation, he was often in extreme poverty. He had even to sell his books to provide for his sustenance. During his ministry in Geneva, the Council, noticing that his coat was threadbare, voted a sum of money to purchase a piece of broadcloth for him.

In his Preface to the Book of Psalms, he says: 'People circulate ridiculous rumours respecting my treasures, my great power, and my wealthy sort of life. But if a man satisfies himself with such simple fare and such common clothing, and does not require more moderation in the humblest than he himself exercises, how can it be said that he is a spendthrift and fond of self-display? My death will prove what they would not believe in my life' (*Me non esse pecuniosum, si vivus quibusdam non persuadeo, mors tandem ostendet*).

His salary, when he occupied the chief ecclesiastical position in Geneva as preacher in the cathedral and minister of its congrega-

LETTERS OF SYMPATHY 119

tion, never exceeded about £160 in our money, and he was provided with a house and garden.

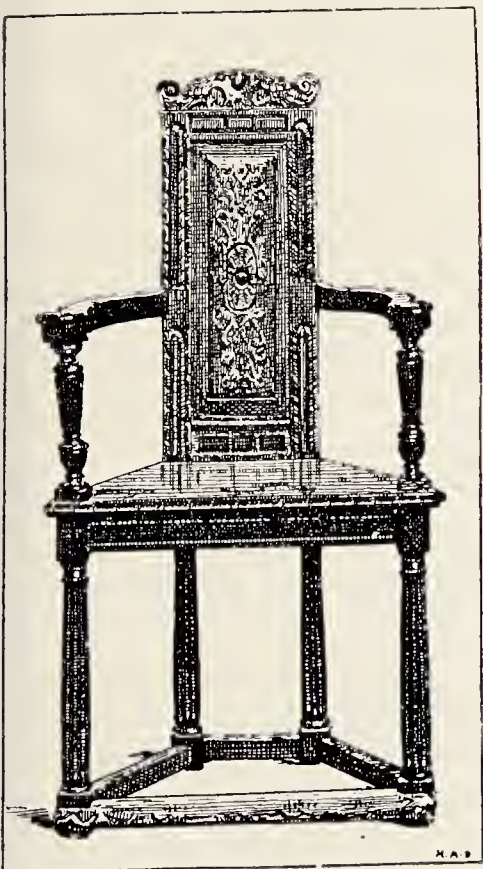
He was a sympathetic man. Stern ^{His sympathy} indeed he could be in denunciation of evil and in condemnation of those whom he believed to be acting contrary to the law of God. But that he had a tender heart is abundantly clear from his correspondence. There is extant a letter which he wrote to Richeburg, a citizen of Strassburg, whose son had died in the plague of 1541. In this he speaks of his affliction in seeing a young man in the first bloom of his years snatched away, 'whom I loved as a son, he loving me not less than a second father. . . . He is as one who, having set sail upon the stormy ocean, is summoned back into port before he reached the open sea. . . . From the confused, uncertain shadows of life, he has been admitted into immortality. . . . But thou wilt say, It is difficult so to suppress a father's affections as not to feel pain at the death of a son. Nor have I wished thee not to grieve. We do not learn a philosophy in the school of Christ which would have us suppress all those

^{Letter to a father about his son's death}

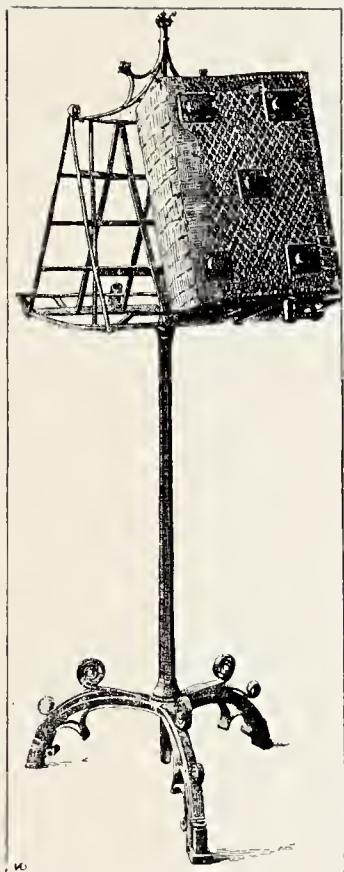
feelings which God has given us, and turn men into stones. All that we have said is only to this end, to persuade thee to set a term to thy grief, and to assuage it; that when thou pourest out thy heart in tears, as nature and fatherly love dictate, thou mayest not altogether resign thyself to grief.' What true sympathy, what wise consolation, breathes in these words!

His letters to Viret, his friend and fellow-worker, show the same tenderness. Speaking of the illness of Viret's wife, he says: 'Be assured that we are as anxious about her, as if she were our own wife or daughter.' And when a rumour of Viret's death was contradicted by letter from Viret himself, he writes: 'As soon as your letter came in sight, such was the storm of joy which succeeded that we were scarcely masters of ourselves. It is well that we had not had a night of sorrow.'

To a father who, in displeasure with his son, had refused to receive him into his house, Calvin wrote a letter of intercession on the son's behalf. To the Duchess of Ferrara, who was in deep sorrow at the death of her son-in-law, Francis, Duke of Guise, and at the assertion of some of the



CALVIN'S CHAIR,
IN THE PULPIT OF ST. PIERRE.



GILT LECTERN IN
CATHEDRAL OF ST. PIERRE,
with Bible of 11th century,
written on vellum.



Reformers that he would be condemned to everlasting punishment, he wrote a most sympathetic letter. He tells her that we must guard against all rash presumption in speaking of a man's future state, 'for there is one Judge only, before whom we must all render up our account.' Guizot says on this, 'Surely very few men in the sixteenth century were liberal and large-hearted enough to use such language concerning the death and the future state of their most formidable enemy.' The words which the Archbishop of Armagh wrote on the death of Archbishop Temple might almost be applied to Calvin :—

*Guizot's
estimate
of Calvin*

'The iron heart to self and not to others
All his long life was given;
The heart of flesh was for his human brothers,
The heart of fire for heaven.'

Beza, who had ample opportunities of knowing Calvin intimately, has left on record his estimate of his character. 'Although nature had endowed Calvin,' he says, 'with a dignified seriousness, both in manner and character, no one was more agreeable than he in ordinary conversation.'

*Beza's
estimate*

He could bear, in a wonderful manner, with the failings of others, when they sprung from mere weakness ; thus he never shamed any one by ill-timed reproofs or discouraged a weak brother ; while, on the other hand, he never spared or overlooked wilful sin. . . . His temperament was naturally choleric, and his active public life had tended greatly to increase this failing ; but the Spirit of God had taught him so to moderate his anger, that no word ever escaped him unworthy of a righteous man. Still less did he ever commit aught unjust towards others. It was only, indeed, when the question concerned religion, and when he had to contend against hardened sinners, that he allowed himself to be moved and excited beyond the bounds of moderation. . . . Having been for sixteen years a witness of his labours, I have pursued the history of his life and death with all fidelity ; and I now unhesitatingly testify, that every Christian may find in this man the noble pattern of a truly Christian life and Christian death ; a pattern, however, which it is as easy to counterfeit as it is difficult to imitate.'

He was an indefatigable worker. Though Calvin a hard worker in his later years especially he suffered much from ill-health, he was always a laborious student. He gave little time to sleep, and was usually at work by five or six in the morning. A letter of his to Farel from Strassburg gives us an idea of his work: 'I remember no day in this whole year in which I have been so pressed with such a variety of occupations. When the messenger was prepared to take the beginning of my work with his letter, I had about twenty leaves to look through. I had then to lecture and preach, to write four letters, make peace between some persons who had quarrelled with each other, and answer more than ten people who came to me for advice.'

Every alternate week at Geneva he preached daily. Three days every week he lectured on theology. He attended regularly the meetings of the consistory, and devoted much time to other public duties.

He was a firm believer in pastoral visitation—a duty too frequently neglected by ministers of the Gospel. Bucer wrote to him in 1547, commending him for his

attention to 'this duty of piety and love.'

Yet, laborious though his life was, he found time for simple amusement. Out of doors he played quoits, and indoors a table game called *clef*.

In this connexion Calvin's attitude to the theatre may be noted. It was not one of blind hostility. The passion of dramatic representation was as strong among the old Genevese as the passion for dancing.

His
attitude
to the
theatre

On April 8, 1546, Monet and several others presented to the Council a 'Morality' play, requesting authority to perform it on the Sunday after Easter. The Council instructed the ministers to be present at a performance of this morality, to see if it was for edification; and on the report of the ministers that the story was 'for edification and confirmation of the Word of God,' the authorisation was granted on April 16.

This 'morality' (probably a Passion-play) was so successful and popular that on May 24 a request was made to the Council for permission to perform the *Acts of the Apostles* for the edification of the people.

'It was resolved to communicate the said story to Monsieur Calvin, and if he found it sober and for edification, that it may be performed.' The 'story' was written by Abel Poupin, one of the ministers of Geneva and a colleague of Calvin.

Calvin refused to give his own individual opinion, preferring only to communicate the decision arrived at in conference with his colleagues. 'And let us at once say,' says Doumergue, 'for the certain astonishment of our readers, that the narrow, unbending opinion was not that of Calvin. He joined with his colleagues by moderating them.'

The minutes of Council of May 31 inform us that the authorisation was granted to perform this piece at Whitsuntide, after having made communications to Monsieur Calvin and Monsieur Abel ; that these two ministers were quite of opinion that there was nothing ungodly (*contre Dieu*) in it ; but that the other pastors made an objection on principle. They do not like it, good or bad (*i.e.* whether the play be good or bad), and do not want plays to be performed.

This is clear : the objection on principle, the formal opposition to theatrical repre-

sentation was made, not by Calvin, but by his colleagues.

The Council asks for a second opinion of Calvin and Abel. If they approve of its being performed, and find nothing ungodly in it, the Council will fix the date of its representation.

Next day, June 1, Calvin appears before the Council. He tries to reconcile the views of those who object to the representation and those who desire it. The objection made by Calvin's colleagues, the ministers, was that some persons would wish to perform certain plays, and would spend their money on these instead of on works of charity. Calvin tries to show that it is not necessary to abandon the one in order to do the other.

The minutes of the Council do not relate what decision was arrived at.

Subsequently, there was a request for permission to perform another play, the *Labours of Hercules*. But as this was a profane play, and professional actors were to be employed, the Council did not hesitate to refuse permission.

Then the *Acts of the Apostles* was brought up again. Calvin reported on behalf of the

ministers that the play was good (*bien saingt et cellon Dieu*), but they thought it expedient that it should not be performed. But the Council thought better to permit the play, and the ministers offered no further opposition.

Writing to Farel on the 3rd July, on the eve of the representation, Calvin says, 'We declared that the performance of this piece did not please us at all. But we did not resist to the end, because there was danger that we should weaken our authority if we opposed it obstinately, and if finally they passed beyond us. I see that we cannot refuse men all amusements' (*video non posse negari omnia oblectamenta*).

Subsequently, Cop (one of the ministers) strongly denounced the drama from the pulpit, and particularly the presence of females on the stage. The result was a riotous demonstration against Cop. Calvin, however, succeeded in allaying the tumult. Viret was present as a spectator at the performance of the play.

It is Ernest Renan who has said: Renan on
Calvin
'Lacking that vivid, deep, sympathetic ardour which was one of the secrets of

**'The most
Christian
Man.'** Luther's success, lacking the charm, the
perilous, languishing tenderness of Francis
de Sales, Calvin succeeded, in an age and
country which called for a reaction towards
Christianity, simply because he was the
most Christian man of his generation.'

CHAPTER IX

CALVIN AS REFORMER

HIS earliest work in Church organization ^{Church discipline} was begun soon after his arrival in Geneva in 1536. It is embodied in the *Articles, Catechism* and *Confession* of 1537. That Calvin's work, as M. Brunetière has acknowledged (see above, p. 73), was eminently spiritual, these *Articles* show. They commence with a declaration in favour of the frequent and dignified observance of the Lord's Supper. Calvin had already in the *Institutes* advocated its celebration every Sunday, but as a concession to the weakness of the people he now recommended its observance, for the present, once a month.

In close connexion with the celebration of the Holy Communion there is the question of Church discipline. The *Articles* recommended the government to appoint upright persons, not easily corruptible, all over the

city, who should have oversight of the life and conduct of all the people, and if they saw any notable fault, should communicate with the ministers, with a view to admonition and reform of the offender. Should these measures fail, excommunication ought to follow.

A further recommendation was that all inhabitants of the city, beginning with the Councillors themselves, should be required to make confession of their faith. And in order that the Christian faith should be understood, a brief and simple outline of it was to be taught to all children, and a public catechising held by the ministers at certain seasons of the year.

These recommendations were accepted by the civil authorities, the Little Council and the Two Hundred, except that referring to the Lord's Supper. It was, as before, to be observed but four times yearly. It is curious how this infrequent communicating, contrary to Calvin's view, became the rule not only in Geneva but in Scotland, where, until recently, it was very generally observed only twice a year.

In Strassburg, however, where he was pastor of the French refugees, Calvin

succeeded in having a monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper. There, too, he established the presbyterian form of Church government.

The admission of the laity to a share in the government of the Church is indeed Calvin's unique distinction as an ecclesiastical reformer. Before his time the Church was governed by the clergy only. But the ruling or 'ministering' presbyter, as distinguished from the clergyman or preaching presbyter, was admitted by him to a share in its control, having been duly elected by the people and set apart to the office.

Laity admitted to a share in Church government

Yet Calvin did not reject episcopacy. In his *Institutes* he admits that in the early Church, 'to guard against dissension, the general consequence of equality, the presbyters in each city chose one of their own number, whom they distinguished by the title of *bishop*. . . . The establishment of one archbishop over all the bishops of each province, and the appointment of patriarchs at the Council of Nice, with rank and dignity superior to the archbishops, were regulations for the preservation of discipline.' (*Inst.*, Book IV. chap. iv., §§ 2 and 4. See also below, p. 144, note.)

His
liturgy

At Strassburg, too, Calvin prepared a liturgy for public worship. Upon this John Knox afterwards based his famous Service-book. The Scottish and Presbyterian reformers generally have been represented as hostile to the use of liturgical forms. Jenny Geddes has been taken as a type of anti-liturgical Puritanism. But the wrath of Jenny Geddes, whom the late Professor John Stuart Blackie apostrophised as

‘O Jenny, Jenny, valiant dame,’

was excited not by the use of a service-book, but by the use of an English service-book, which the authorities of that time sought to impose upon the Scottish people.

Calvin’s liturgy included the General Confession, very similar to that of the Church of England, the recital or singing of the Ten Commandments and the Apostles’ Creed, prayers of supplication and intercession, and the Lord’s Prayer. Later on, in his Genevan order of service, he made provision for extempore prayer along with the prescribed prayers.

Important
place
assigned
to music

Calvin, too, gave a large place to music in Church worship. This was, as Doumergue has shown, different from the attitude of

Zwingli, who had abolished Church music at Zürich. At Strassburg, Calvin published the first small collection of metrical Psalms and hymns in French, eight of which were by Clément Marot and seven by himself. Afterwards in Geneva he added a hundred of the Psalms, translated into French by Beza. Henry, Calvin's German biographer, says: 'It is highly characteristic of the spirit of the age that Marot's psalms were sung with success at the court of Francis I. and later at that of Francis II. and the formidable Catherine. King Henri II. sang, while hunting, the psalm, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks," and the King of Navarre, "Lord, avenge me." The Sorbonne sought in vain to persuade Francis to suppress the translation.' Kampschulte shows (l. 455 *n.*) that modern research has proved several of the Psalms formerly assigned to Marot to be the work of Calvin.

The principal embodiment of Calvin's views on Church government is found in the *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques*, drafted by him in 1541, on his return from Strassburg to Geneva, at the request of the Little Council. Though modified by this body

*The Ordon-
nances
Ecclési-
astiques*

and the Two Hundred, these *Ordonnances* are on the whole the expression of his principles. Dr Fairbairn (*Cambridge Modern History*) says : 'The *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* may be described as Calvin's programme of Genevan reform, or his method for applying to the local and external Church the government which our Lord had instituted and the Apostles had realised.' They provided for the four classes of office, following the example of the primitive Church, of pastors or preachers, doctors or teachers, elders and deacons. The doctors or teachers corresponded, in his system, to our modern professors of theology. He provided that the pastors or preachers should be nominated by the clergy, their names presented to the city council for their approval and confirmation, and finally submitted to the congregation for their consent.

The Church elders were to watch over the morals of all. They were elected every year, but might be continued in office for a longer period. They, with the pastors, formed the consistory. In Geneva the elders were in the majority. To this body, which assembled every Thursday, was

assigned the administration of Church discipline, as in the Presbyterian session (or 'kirk-session') in English-speaking countries. The deacons had care of the poor and the sick and the offerings of the congregation. Full provision was made under this system for poor-relief, and begging was forbidden.

In Calvin's system Church and State Church
and State were closely interwoven. And while he maintained, as we have seen, the spiritual independence of the Church in matters affecting doctrine and worship, he gave a large place to the civil government in questions of administration. Thus he provided in the *Ordonnances* that the Church could deal with offenders up to the point of excommunication, but afterwards, 'where it shall be necessary to make some punishment or constrain the parties, the ministers with the Consistory, having heard the parties and made remonstrances and admonitions as shall be fitting, shall report all to the Council, which shall deliberate on their report, and order and render judgment according to the merits of the case.' The elders had a seat in the civil court, and

were the bond of union between Church and State.

Calvin as
social
reformer

It is a commonplace to say that Calvin's idea of the state was that of a theocracy. He aimed at making Geneva a city of God. And in that city, in spite of great opposition and more than one temporary defeat, he effected a great social and moral reformation. John Knox said of it, 'In other places I confess Christ to be truly preached; but manners and religion to be so sincerely reformed I have not yet seen in any other place beside.' (M'Crie: *Life of Knox*, I. 197.)

Public
morality

We have seen what the condition of Genevan morals was before Calvin came to it. With his high ideals of what individual and national life ought to be, he set himself resolutely to the amendment of public morality. He had to contend with vices which are the vices of our own time and of our own land. Immorality was open and unblushing. Drunkenness was rampant. Gambling even then held its deadly fascination for many. Against all these evils he spoke from the pulpit. Against them, too, he assisted in the formation of a court of morals. Adulterers were to be imprisoned,



COSTUMES AT GENEVA IN THE TIME OF CALVIN.

to pay a fine, and to do public penance. Playing games for money was prohibited. Doumergue, however, has shown that Calvin, in urging legislation of this kind, was simply acting in continuation, and perhaps extension, of a right exercised even before the Reformation by the episcopal authority and by the city councils. That historian, no doubt, urges this with the purpose of clearing Calvin from the charge of intermeddling unduly with the conduct of the people. He saw great evils, and he grappled with them. (*See Appendix A.*)

Before Calvin's coming to Geneva the civic authorities in some at least of the Swiss cities found it necessary to check the abuses which had arisen in connection with taverns and other places of public resort. The Council of Zürich in 1530, and that of Bern in 1534, suppressed hostelries of a low class, only authorising respectable inns in the towns and villages and on the main roads.

Severity
at Geneva
not in-
augurated
by Calvin

In 1529, according to Bonivard, 'the prisoner of Chillon,' the hostelries and taverns of Geneva were so numerous that they were able to billet in them all the troops

sent by Bern and Fribourg against the Savoyards. And until Calvin's intervention they were the scenes of unrestricted licence (*das ungebundenste Leben*, says Liebenau).

Then there were several social clubs, called *abbayes*, a kind of rival to the taverns. They existed before Calvin. What he did was to insist on the regulations for their good order being carried out.

Further, the necessity for restrictive legislation arose from the great influx of strangers. Geneva was in the sixteenth century a town of about 13,000 inhabitants. From all parts, France, England, Spain, Italy, came refugees. In eleven years, 1549-1559, the population of the city was augmented by a foreign immigration of more than 5000 residents (Mallet, *Recherches historiques et statistiques sur la population de Genève*. 1837, p. 41, n. 2).

'It is not surprising,' says Doumergue, 'that Geneva took precautions with these new-comers. And as it owed its independence, its existence, to its faith, the point on which it took its first and greatest precautions was that of religion.'

"'Firstly,'" says the formulary of the letters of habitation issued in 1550, it is necessary

to take a loyal oath "to live according to the holy Reformation, and to be obedient and subject to us." All were required to attend sermons and public worship, and to denounce blasphemers and dissolute and dishonest persons. No Roman Catholic could be received as a "habitant," still less as a "bourgeois." Any burgess who became a Roman Catholic forfeited his citizenship. It was not until the seventeenth century that a Roman Catholic was permitted to reside in the city, and then as an exceptional case, and for a limited time.'

As Professor H. D. Foster, in his article 'The Blue Laws' on 'Geneva before Calvin' in *The American Historical Review* (1903), has shown, 'the Blue Laws, *i.e.* the regulations affecting religion and morals, were not an invention of Calvin and the Puritan State. They were rather the sequelæ of the Middle Ages.' The blame attached to Calvin for inquisitorial and fastidious legislation has been largely based on want of knowledge. He found the form existing. He brought to bear upon it his own high ideals, his conception of a godly, righteous, and sober life for the individual and for the nation.

Calvin's
services to
education

Like Knox, Calvin was a firm believer in education. One of his greatest and most abiding works at Geneva was the establishment of the college, now the University of that city. Beza was its first rector, and with him were associated professors of Greek, Hebrew, philosophy, and a staff of subordinate tutors or masters for the classes of the high school connected with it, while Beza and Calvin gave lectures in theology. The college, which thus began with arts and divinity, afterwards included medicine and law. From all parts of Europe, England, and Scotland students flocked to it. At Calvin's death its high school department (*scholia privata*), corresponding to the German gymnasium, had twelve hundred scholars, and its university, or *scholia publica*, had three hundred students. On June 5, 1559, a day now observed by the Senate of the University as *dies academicus*, the college was inaugurated by a solemn service in the Church of Saint Pierre, at which the magistrates and all the learned men of the city were present. Calvin delivered an address in French on the usefulness of educational institutions, and Beza followed with a Latin oration.



PROMENADE ST. ANTOINE, GENEVA,
With Calvin's College and Cathedral.



COURTYARD OF CALVIN'S COLLEGE.

One of the fullest accounts of Calvin's educational work, and an account marked by much sympathy and fairness, is that of Kampschulte, the famous Old Catholic Professor at Bonn University. He gives a careful analysis of the subjects laid down for study in the Geneva College, and the time devoted to each. And then he remarks: 'The Calvinistic school is to educate the whole man, not merely his intellect, but also his character and will; it is to give him a footing for the whole of life. Along with the didactical side, it emphasises more than any other the pædagogic work of the school. It is, as Beza's inaugural address announced, an institution not merely for instruction, but also for education (*nicht bloss Unterrichts-, sondern auch Erziehungsanstalt*), nay, indeed, it is preferably the latter, and seeks, with Spartan severity, in accordance with the character of its founder, to be worthy of this its task' (II. Band, p. 333).

Kampschulte, too, was, we believe, the first to institute a comparison between Calvin's academical regulations and the educational system of the Jesuits, *Ratio atque institutio studiorum societatis Jesu*,

Kamp-
schulte on
Calvin's
College

The Jesuit
imitation
of Calvin's
academi-
cal system

which first appeared at Rome in 1591, twenty-seven years after Calvin's death. The two systems, says this author, are in essential agreement in their ideas and method. 'This recognition and approval,' he says, 'which the Geneva Reformer's plan of study elicited even from his avowed opponents, is at the same time the best proof of its adaptability to its time and purpose' (II. Band, p. 340).

Church reform, social reform, educational reform, all these were the work of Calvin's master-mind.

Guizot on
the defects
of Calvin's
legislation

Defects of course there were. Perhaps the words of M. Guizot best express the objections to his civil legislation: 'Although Calvin's system was righteously conceived and carried out, his thoughts and legislation were influenced by two false notions, which soon proved fatal. . . . Calvin's religious system for the Evangelical Church almost entirely overlooked individual liberty. He desired to regulate private life in accordance with the laws of morality and by means of the powers of the State; to penetrate all social and family life, and the soul of every man, and to restrict individual responsibility within an ever-narrowing circle. In the



CLOISTER IN CALVIN'S COLLEGE, GENEVA.

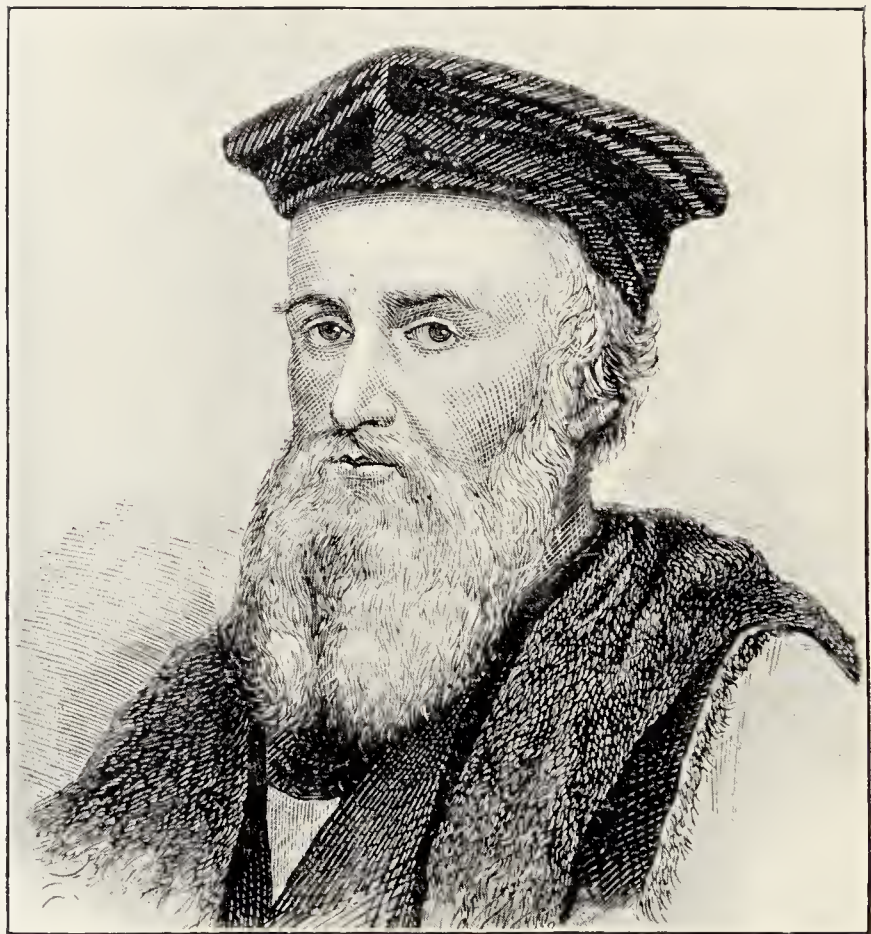
relation of the Evangelical Church to the State, he asserted and carried out the principle adopted in the Catholic Church, the right of the spiritual power to appeal to the secular arm, in order to suppress and punish those offences against religion recognised by the State ; that is, impiety and heresy. Calvin thus denied and violated the rights of conscience and personal liberty in private life and in matters of religion — a deplorable but natural consequence of his contempt for and denial of man's free-will in his general doctrine' (Guizot, *Great Christians of France*, p. 267).

But over against this we may set the judgment of another distinguished French historian. Michelet says: 'This élite of France, with an élite of Italy, founded the real Geneva, this astonishing asylum between three nations which, without support (for it feared even the Swiss), lasted by its moral force. No territory, no army ; nothing for space, or time, or matter ; the city of the mind, built by Stoicism on the rock of predestination. . . . To every people in peril Sparta, instead of an army, sent a Spartan. It was so in Geneva. To

Michelet's
tribute to
Calvin's
social
work

England it gave Peter Martyr, to Scotland Knox, to the Netherlands Marnix; three men and three revolutions' (Michelet, *Histoire de France*, 1855, x. pp. 483, 484).

[Note on p. 131, *Calvin's Attitude to Episcopacy*. An important statement on this subject occurs in a letter of Calvin to the King of Poland, in 1555, quoted by Henry, ii. 343. Calvin says:—'So also there might be bishops for the various provinces or cities, whose office it should be to keep order in all things, as circumstances required; and one might be chosen from every assembly of bishops, to whom the principal charge might be entrusted.']



ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.

CHAPTER X

CALVIN'S INFLUENCE ON THE REFORMED CHURCHES

WITH the leaders of the Reformation in England Calvin was in constant correspondence. On the death of Henry VIII. in 1547, Hertford, Duke of Somerset, became Protector during the minority of Edward VI. He was an ardent reformer of the Church. By his order images and crucifixes were removed from the churches. To him Calvin wrote letters of sympathy and counsel. Recognising that there were two extreme parties in England, the one of 'fanatics who, under the pretence of zeal for the Gospel, overturn all social order; the other of those who obstinately desire to retain the whole mass of Catholic superstitions,' Calvin advises Somerset to resist both. 'The best means, however, to check the evil,' he adds, 'is to instruct men in the knowledge that we are created after

His correspondence with the Duke of Somerset

the image of God, and that Christianity is opposed to all disorder.'

Corre-
spondence
with Ed-
ward VI.
and Arch-
bishop
Cranmer

To Edward VI. himself Calvin wrote more than once. He sent him a copy of his *Commentary on Isaiah*. He dedicated to him his *Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*, and afterwards his *Commentary on the Eighty-seventh Psalm*.

Between Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Calvin, many friendly letters were exchanged. The correspondence is chiefly notable as showing how these two great men rose superior to their minor differences on questions of Church government. Calvin has so often been accused of narrowness and intolerance that it is interesting to find him pleading for unity. He responded to Cranmer's suggestion that 'pious, sensible men brought up in the school of God, should unite in setting forth a common confession of Christian doctrine,' and expressed the wish that Cranmer would appoint some place in England where the heads of all the Protestant Churches might meet, and agree upon certain fundamental articles of belief as a basis for permanent union. 'As far as I am concerned,' he says, 'I will readily pass over ten seas to effect

Proposed
Confer-
ence of
Protestant
Leaders

the object in view.' His friendship for England, as well as his zeal for unity, is shown in the following sentences: 'If the welfare of England alone were concerned, I should think it a sufficient reason to act thus. But at present, when our purpose is to unite the sentiments of all good and learned men, and so, according to the rule of Scripture, to bring the separated Churches into one, neither labour nor trouble of any kind ought to be spared.'

This noble vision of closer unity was shared by Melancthon, Bucer, Peter Martyr, and Bullinger. But the death of Edward VI. and Cranmer's subsequent martyrdom prevented the assembling of the conference, and nothing further was done.

The accession of Elizabeth in 1559 brought Calvin into touch with English Church life once more. He dedicated to her in that year his *Commentary on Isaiah*. In the same year he corresponded with the Bishop of London, Grindal, about the French Church in London, in whose formation Grindal had been very active. He sent him a pastor, who had been trained under him at Geneva, to minister to the London congregation.

Queen
Elizabeth
and
Grindal,
Bishop of
London

Toplady
on
Calvin's
influence
on the
Church of
England

The whole subject of the relation of Calvin and his teaching to the Church of England has been very fully treated by Toplady, the author of the hymn 'Rock of Ages,' and Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon. In his book, *Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England* (6 vols., London, 1825), he shows that the earliest English Reformers, Wycliffe and Tyndale, held substantially the same views as Calvin.

Bishop Burnet, in his *History of the Reformation of England*, recalls Calvin's letter to Somerset, October 29, 1548, encouraging him to go on with the Reformation. In this letter he much approves a set form of prayers, whereby the agreement of all the Churches should more manifestly appear. He advises a more complete reformation, including the abolition of prayers for the dead, chrism and extreme unction, as nowhere recommended in Scripture. But, above all, he complains of the great impieties and vices that were so common in England, as swearing, drinking, and uncleanness; and earnestly prays the Lord Protector that these things may be looked after.



AUGUSTUS MONTAGUE TOPLADY.

ELIZABETHAN CALVINISTS 149

Calvin, says Toplady, 'did not remonstrate in vain. The Communion Office underwent a further reform in 1550; as did the whole liturgy in 1551, when, among many other alterations, the chrism in baptism, the unction for the sick, and prayers for the dead, were totally expunged.'

Hooker, the author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, in his preface to that work says that Calvin was incomparably the wisest man that ever the French Church had, and a worthy vessel of God's glory.

Hooker on
Calvin

Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift, the three Archbishops of Canterbury in Elizabeth's time, all held Calvinistic views.

It was Laud who struck the first blow at Calvinism in the Church of England. He became Bishop of St David's in 1621. 'This prelate,' says Toplady, 'had not worn lawn sleeves much longer than eight months, before he became instrumental in procuring and in drawing up a well-known court paper entitled, "Directions concerning Preachers." The third article of these directions enjoined "That no preacher of what title soever, under the degree of a bishop or dean, at the least, do, from henceforth, presume to preach, in any

Laud
attacks
Calvinism

popular auditory, the deep points of predestination, election, reprobation, or the universality, efficacy, resistibility or irresistibility of God's grace; but leave those themes rather to be handled by the learned men'' [in the two universities]. This paper under royal authority was dated from Windsor in 1622.

After the accession of Charles I. Laud got him, in 1626, to revive the directions concerning preachers; of which a new edition appeared in the form of a proclamation, extending the prohibition even to bishops and deans who were, by what Toplady calls this ill-judged stretch of royal supremacy, commanded to forbear from treating of predestination in their sermons and writings.

The Articles and Homilies of the Church of England remained Calvinistic; but after the Restoration, as is shown by Hume, Arminian views were held by the majority of the clergy.

**The Pres-
byterians
and Inde-
pendents**

At that time, Calvinistic views, outside the Church of England, had become embodied in the Westminster Confession of Faith, adopted by the Assembly of Divines held under the Long Parliament, 1643. This

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION 151

Confession expressed the views both of the Presbyterians and Independents of that time.

It is a remarkable fact that the Westminster Confession is very largely a reproduction of the Articles of the Irish Church, prepared thirty years before by Ussher, afterwards archbishop. Professor Mitchell, in his Introduction to *Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines* (1874, p. xlvii.), says: 'In the order and titles of many of its chapters, as well as in the language of whole sections or subdivisions of chapters, and in many single phrases and *voces signatæ* occurring throughout the Confession, the Westminster Divines . . . have followed very closely in the footsteps of Ussher and his Irish brethren. The headings of those chapters which cannot be clearly traced to this source may generally be found in a *Body of Divinity* which was published in his [Ussher's] name while the [Westminster] Assembly was sitting, and which, though he declined to sanction it as a statement of his own opinions, he admitted that he had, in early life, compiled from the writings of others.'

This shows how close was the doctrinal

identity of the evangelical Churches of the seventeenth century. Episcopalians, Independents, Presbyterians, differing as to modes of Church government, were at one in holding in its essentials the creed of John Calvin.

Calvin's
influence
in Scot-
land

So far as Scotland is concerned, the teaching of Calvin, as followed by Knox, dominated its religious thought and Church government. Knox, who had been at Geneva from 1556 to 1559, had the gratification of seeing the Presbyterian form established in the Church of Scotland in 1560. In that year the first Confession of Faith, drafted by Knox, was accepted by the Scottish Parliament. Its main positions are entirely Calvinistic. So also were the rules of government in the Scottish Book of Discipline adopted at the same time.

In 1647, after the two nations of England and Scotland had been united for four years by the Solemn League and Covenant, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith. That Confession still remains a 'subordinate standard' of the

Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, though the modes of subscription to it vary, and the general tendency is to shorter creeds.

In France, during Calvin's own life-time, wonderful changes took place. He who had to leave his native country on account of his religious opinions, and who had heard of his fellow-countrymen suffering imprisonment, confiscation, exile and death, lived to hear of the first Protestant Synod at Paris in 1559, and to see the edict of January 1562, by which the Evangelical Church was granted free exercise of its religion. The wars of religion, it is true, followed, but they were terminated before his death, for a time at least, by the Peace of Amboise, 1563. In the beginning of 1559 there were seventy-two regularly organized Protestant congregations in France. From Geneva came their pastors, trained under the direct influence of Calvin and inspired by his spirit.

Holland came under the power of Calvin's teaching more, perhaps, than any other country. So completely was this the case, that when, about fifty years after Calvin's

Influence
on French
Protes-
tantism

Holland a
Calvinistic
country

death, Arminius, a professor of theology at Leyden, rejected the Genevan doctrines, a Synod held at Dort, in 1618, condemned the Arminian views, and those who held them were deprived of their office. The great Dutch Reformed Church of the United States of America, like its mother Church in Holland, still holds the same Calvinistic creed.

The
Reformed
Church in
Poland

In the Reformation which took place in Poland, Calvin was deeply interested. He dedicated his *Commentary on Hebrews*, in 1549, to the king, Sigismund Augustus. His *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, in Latin, he dedicated to Prince Radziwill, the principal leader of the Reformed party. His principal correspondent in Poland, however, was John Laski or a Lasco, who was also the friend of Erasmus, Cranmer, and Zwingli, and who became the chief superintendent of all the Protestant Churches in Lesser Poland. Under him Calvin's ideas of Church government were put into operation, and the Bible translated into Polish. One of Calvin's latest acts was to write an Admonition to the Polish people.

The visitor to Budapest to-day finds in the centre of that beautiful city on the Danube a square called the Calvin Square. It is indeed a surprise to find the Reformer's name thus honoured. The surprise increases when he finds the spacious 'Reformed' Church at the side of the square, and learns that it is but one of many vigorous centres of Reformed Church life throughout Hungary. The Protestant population of Hungary numbers about four millions, of whom two-thirds belong to the Reformed or Calvinistic Church. The foundations of this Church were laid in Calvin's life-time. By 1563, the year before his death, his doctrines were generally accepted in the Protestant Churches, and the Presbyterian form of Church government was in use.

Influence
of Calvin
in Hun-
gary

So far as Germany is concerned, the Lutheran theology, that of the Augsburg Confession, has remained the dominant force. But even there Calvinism has had many able and earnest followers.¹ Its doctrines were enshrined in the Heidelberg Catechism of 1562. For Luther himself, although differing from him on some points both of

In
Germany

¹ See Appendix B.

doctrine and government, Calvin had a sincere respect. In a letter to Laski of Poland in 1556, he said that there was nothing in the Augsburg Confession which did not agree with his doctrine. In Germany to-day there is a tendency to make less of the differences between the Lutheran and Calvinistic ('Reformed') Churches, and to blend both together in one united Protestant or Evangelical Church.

Sweden
and
Denmark

Like Germany, Sweden and Denmark were too much under Lutheran influence for Calvin's view to make much headway. But he was interested in the Reformation work in both countries. To Gustavus Vasa, King of Sweden, he dedicated his *Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets*, and to King Christian of Denmark he dedicated his French edition of the *Acts of the Apostles*.

There are few parallels to the influence which Calvin exercised in his short life-time of fifty-four years. Feeble in health, but of indomitable industry, unfaltering faith, and determined will, he contributed mightily to the great revolt from Rome. He corresponded with kings and rulers. His books

became the rich mine from which theologians and preachers drew their ideas and their inspiration. On the lines which he laid down, national Churches were organized and developed. By him high ideals of civic life were set before the world.

And who can measure the influence which his doctrines have exercised since his death? The house which stands on the site of that occupied by Calvin in the rue Calvin at Geneva now bears over its door the inscription, *Bureau de Salubrité*. It is the office of public health. The title is not without significance. The life and teaching of Calvin were a moral tonic to Geneva, and to the world. Austere he may have been, but he lived at a time when austerity was needed. His doctrines have their defects, but they moulded men. They elevated character. They purified national life.

Influence
of Calvin
since his
death

It was something for men to realize the sovereignty of God, His divine purpose in their lives, and the high standard of life which the profession of Christianity involves. These were the convictions which inspired the Huguenots of France, the sturdy Dutchmen,

the Puritans of England, the Covenanters of Scotland, and the Pilgrim Fathers who laid broad and deep the foundations of civil and religious liberty beyond the seas. Whether men agree with Calvin's views or not, they must recognise his influence upon history. Lord Morley says: 'Calvinism saved Europe in the sixteenth century.' And Bancroft, the American historian, has written: 'He who does not honour the memory and influence of Calvin, betrays his ignorance of the origin of American liberty.' (*See Appendix C.*)

CHAPTER XI

CALVIN AND SERVETUS

ON the death of Servetus, and Calvin's share in it, much ink has been spilled. Roman Catholic controversialists, forgetful of the Inquisition and its holocausts, or desiring to make the most of the isolated acts of Protestant tyranny, have branded Calvin as an executioner. Even Protestant writers, ill-informed as to Calvin's share in that lamentable incident, glibly say, 'Calvin burned Servetus.'¹ Calvin has been looked upon as a monster of vindictiveness and cruelty.

Let us say at once that we condemn the burning of Servetus. It is contrary to the genius of Protestantism to put any man to death for his religious opinions. But that genius, the genius of New Testament Christianity, was only slowly

¹ Thus, for instance, Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 351. Compare Mark Pattison, *Essays*, ii. 6.

awakening in the sixteenth century. The Protestants of that time had to unlearn the Roman Catholic maxim, that you are justified in killing a man's body in order to save his soul, or in putting a heretic to death in order to preserve the Church.

But the odium attached to Calvin in connexion with the death of Servetus has been excessive, and to a large extent unjust. He is blamed because he acted on a principle shared by Protestant as well as Roman Catholic theologians of that time. He is blamed, in other words, for not being in advance of his age.

It is unnecessary to recite the whole history of Servetus. But some facts connected with his teachings, trial, and death, are essential to a right judgment on the case.

Melanch-
thon's
opinion of
Servetus

The chief object of the attacks of Servetus was the doctrine of the Trinity, and for that reason Calvin has been specially abused by those who deny that doctrine. Anti-Trinitarianism was certainly unfortunate in its champion. Melanchthon, one of the fairest and gentlest of men, says in a

CHARACTER OF SERVETUS 161

letter quoted by Willis, one of the apologists of Servetus, that he has been reading Servetus a good deal, and to another correspondent, 'You ask me what I think of Servetus? I see him indeed sufficiently sharp and subtle in disputation, but I do not give him credit for much depth. He is possessed, as it seems to me, of confused imaginations, and his thoughts are not well matured on the subjects he discusses.' Œcolampadius, the Basel theologian, who had met with Servetus, and tried by friendly conference to win him to the orthodox faith, wrote to Zwingli that Servetus 'is so proud, presumptuous and quarrelsome that it is all to no purpose.'

That Servetus was a man of ability cannot be disputed. He rendered important services to medical science, and anticipated Harvey by his theory of the pulmonary circulation of the blood. But even in his own profession he had made many enemies, by the accusations of ignorance which he brought against the medical men of his time. He was denounced by the Medical Faculty of Paris as an impostor and a wind-bag, because of his astrological views

Servetus
and the
medical
profession

and his practice of casting nativities in harmony therewith, and he was forbidden to act as a professor or practitioner of judicial astrology, otherwise called divination.

Servetus
regarded
as a blas-
phemer
rather
than as a
heretic

In his attacks upon the doctrine of the Trinity he used language which was repulsive to all reverent minds. In one letter to Calvin, for example, he said: 'False are all the invisible Gods of the Trinitarians, as false as the gods of the Babylonians.' Elsewhere he spoke of the Trinity as a three-headed Cerberus, and used other language with which we prefer not to sully our pages. It is enough to say that it is language of a kind still regarded as punishable by English law.

All this is of importance in estimating the attitude of the Reformers toward Servetus. He was looked upon as being not so much a heretic as a blasphemer.

Servetus
con-
demned
by the In-
quisition
at Vienne

Again, let it be borne in mind that before his trial at Geneva, Servetus had already been tried and sentenced by the Roman Catholic authorities at Vienne, in France. The attempt has been made to throw upon Calvin the blame for the denunciation

of Servetus to these authorities. Dr Willis strongly supports this, and even an impartial writer like Professor Walker seems to think that in the later stages, at any rate, 'Calvin must be deemed the chief, though indirect agent in the denunciation of Servetus to the Catholic court.'

To this charge, however, Calvin's own distinct statement is a sufficient reply. In one of his epistles he says: 'I have the credit given me of having him arrested at Vienne. But why such familiarity between me and the satellites of the Pope? Is it to be believed that confidential letters could have passed between parties who had as little in common as Christ and Belial? Yet why many words to refute that which simple denial from me suffices to answer?'

As a matter of fact, Servetus was first brought under the notice of the Roman Catholic authorities through a correspondence between Arneys, a Roman Catholic gentleman at Lyons, and his friend William Trie, who had become a Protestant, and had taken refuge at Geneva. Arneys had written to Trie, urging him to return to

the Church of Rome. In his reply, Trie defended Protestants against charges of heresy and disorder, and said that they never suffered the name of God to be blasphemed or errors to be diffused without opposing them. And then he alluded to Servetus, who, though a blasphemer, was in France held in great esteem and treated as if he had done nothing amiss. Trie also sent to Arneys part of the book by Servetus, the *Christianismi Restitutio*.

In this unpremeditated way the name of Servetus was mentioned. The correspondence did not begin from Geneva or on the Protestant side, but at Lyons and on the Roman Catholic side. And it was a private correspondence between friends.¹

¹ While these pages were passing through the press, the writer has read an article in the *Bulletin* of the Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français for Sept.-Oct. 1908, by the Rev. N. Weiss, Secretary of that Society. In this article M. Weiss gives a conclusive reply to the charge, still being repeated on the eve of Calvin's quater-centenary, that it was the Reformer who denounced Servetus to the Inquisition at Vienne. He quotes, for example, from Trie's second letter, in reply to the request of Arneys for the complete book of Servetus. 'When I wrote to you,' says Trie, 'the letter which you communicated

Arneys placed his friend's letter in the hands of the Roman Catholic authorities. Servetus was summoned before their tribunal at Vienne in March 1553. During the trial he made his escape from prison on April 7. But on the 17th June he was condemned to death by slow fire, and was burnt in effigy.

However effective the *tu quoque* argument, it hardly becomes Roman Catholic controversialists to use it by saying, 'Calvin

to those whom I accused of indifference, I did not think the matter would go so far. My intention was only to show you how fine is the zeal and devotion of those who call themselves pillars of the Church, while they suffer such disorder in their own midst, and yet persecute poor Christians who desire to follow God in simplicity.' Trie states that Arneys had made public 'that which I meant to write for you only.' And, most important of all, as far as Calvin is concerned, he adds that it was with great difficulty that he obtained from the latter the book by Servetus, and that Calvin had only yielded to his importunities on the ground that it was to vindicate Trie himself.

M. Weiss further shows that Trie's first letter was written when every one was lamenting in Geneva the fate of five young Protestant Frenchmen who had been languishing in prison at Lyons since May 1552. They had appealed to the Parliament of Paris against the condemnation of the ecclesiastical court of Lyons, but the appeal had been dismissed on Feb. 18, 1553, a few days before Trie wrote his letter, and they were burned at the stake on May 16.

burned Servetus.' Even if he did so, he was punishing a man whom the Roman Catholic authorities themselves judged worthy of death by fire.

Calvin
accuses
Servetus

Now let us pass to the part which Calvin admittedly took in connexion with the trial of Servetus at Geneva. For some reason which has never been explained, Servetus, after some weeks' wandering about, came to Geneva in August. Calvin, hearing of his presence there, informed the Council. Servetus was arrested, and Calvin drew up articles of accusation against him. After several days of examination, the Council asked for written documents to be furnished

Opinion of
the other
city
councils of
Switzer-
land

on both sides. These documents, containing Calvin's charges on the one side and the replies of Servetus on the other, were sent, along with the *Restitutio*, to the Churches and Councils of Zurich, Bern, Basel and Schaffhausen. The Council requested their opinion.

The replies received were in every case hostile to Servetus. The method of punishment was not suggested, but all the Churches held that Servetus should be made an example of. The magistrates

of the various cities were equally strong in their support of Calvin. It is evident that it was the blasphemous language of Servetus which specially called forth their indignation.

On the 26th of October, the Council con- Calvin
demned Servetus to die by fire. Calvin seeks to
approved of the punishment of death, but mitigate
he sought to mitigate the sentence. In a the
letter to Farel he said, 'I think he will be punish-
condemned to die; but I wish that what is ment
horrible in the punishment may be spared him.' After the sentence he wrote again to Farel, 'We have endeavoured to change the mode of execution, but without avail.'

To say therefore that 'Calvin burned Servetus,' is to utter what at most is but a half-truth. Calvin was not the sole actor. He was one of many. As the representative of Protestant opinion, he acted in his public capacity. That Servetus was worthy of death was the general opinion of the time, and by no means peculiar to Calvin. Coleridge said that the death of Servetus was not Calvin's guilt especially, but the common opprobrium of all European Christendom. So far as burning is concerned, Calvin opposed it. He urged

the swifter and therefore more merciful death by beheading.

Andrew
Fuller's
judgment

The remarks of the great Baptist preacher, Andrew Fuller, are worth recording here. Speaking of Calvin's treatment of Servetus, he says: 'Far be it from us to vindicate him, or any other man, in the business of persecution. We abhor everything of the kind as much as our opponents. Though the principles for which he contended appear to us, in the main, to be just; yet the weapons of his warfare, in this instance, were carnal. . . . As a Baptist, I might indulge resentment against Cranmer, who caused some of that denomination to be burned alive; yet I am inclined to think, from all that I have read of Cranmer, that notwithstanding his conduct in these instances, he was upon the whole of an amiable disposition. . . . It was the opinion that *erroneous religious principles are punishable by the civil magistrate* that did the mischief, whether at Geneva, in Transylvania, or in Britain; and to this, rather than to Trinitarianism or Unitarianism, it ought to be imputed.' (*The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared.* By Andrew Fuller, 1802, pp. 159-162.)



EXPIATORY MONUMENT TO SERVETUS,
At Champel, near Geneva.

EXPIATORY MONUMENT 169

Modern Protestantism has, however, with no uncertain sound, expressed its opinion of the death of Servetus. On the spot where on October 27, 1553, Servetus suffered death at Champel, near Geneva, an expiatory monument was unveiled in November 1903. On one side of it is the simple record of the birth and death of Michel Servet. And on the other side are these words.

The ex-
piatory
monu-
ment to
Servetus

FILS

RESPECTUEUX ET RECONNAISSANTS

DE CALVIN

NOTRE GRAND RÉFORMATEUR

MAIS CONDAMNANT UNE ERREUR

QUI FUT CELLE DE SON SIÈCLE

ET FERMEMENT ATTACHÉS

À LA LIBERTÉ DE CONSCIENCE

SELON LES VRAIS PRINCIPES

DE LA RÉFORMATION ET DE L'ÉVANGILE

NOUS AVONS ÉLEVÉ

CE MONUMENT EXPIATOIRE

LE XXVII OCTOBRE MCMIII

(Duteous and grateful followers of Calvin our great Reformer, yet condemning an error which was that of his age, and strongly

attached to liberty of conscience, according to the true principles of the Reformation and of the Gospel, we have erected this expiatory monument, October 27, 1903.)

The funds for the erection of this monument were contributed by members of the Reformed Churches in Switzerland, France, and Holland, and of the Presbyterian Churches in the United Kingdom and America. Its erection was promoted by the Historical and Archæological Society of Geneva.

On the occasion of its unveiling an address was delivered by Professor Doumergue, of Montauban, whose great work on Calvin entitled him to speak with authority.

A chal-
lenge to
the Church
of Rome

‘Suppose,’ he said, ‘that to-morrow the daily papers were to publish the following item of news: “The Papal Nuncio at Paris has arrived at Rome, and Pius X. has at once acquainted him with a project which, it seems, he has very much at heart. The matter relates to the erection of a monument in expiation of the massacres of St Bartholomew. In order to proclaim that, in the name of the Church, he repudiates its

action in the persecutions and intolerance of past centuries, the Pope has decided to raise in front of the Louvre and under the shadow of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, whose bell tolled the signal for that terrible butchery, a block of granite with this simple inscription : *In the name of the Church and of Catholic Christianity* : PECCAVIMUS. The monument will be unveiled on the 24th of August next."

'What stupefaction would prevail in the political as well as in the religious world! How the newspapers would be snatched from the hands of the vendors! At first one would refuse to believe one's eyes. And what an immense power, what prestige Rome would at once regain! Her most dangerous adversaries would be disarmed. Free-thought would no longer be able to reproach her on account of the Inquisition. Protestants would be compelled to withdraw the charges relating to the Dragonnades and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Since the Reformation of the sixteenth century, no revolution would have been more thorough or more wide-reaching.'

Without taking too literally all the results

which the learned professor forecasts from Rome's possible disavowal of persecution, there can be no doubt that one of the accusations against that Church would be no longer possible. So far, however, there seems no sign of its amendment in this direction. It still claims the right to persecute heretics. Its bishops take an oath to do so.

Within the last few years, a debate took place in the Athenæum of Madrid, a society of the most learned men of that city, most of them at least nominally Roman Catholics. One of the speakers denounced the intolerance of the Roman Church, when he was interrupted by one of his audience with the exclamation, 'What about Servetus?' The speaker was ready with his reply. He referred to the expiatory monument at Champel. That, he said, expresses the spirit of Protestantism. Let the Church of Rome do likewise. Let it express regret for its mistakes in the past. Let it erect an expiatory monument in the place that is still known in Madrid as the *Quemadero de la Cruz*, the burning-place of the Cross, where the martyrs of the Inquisition yielded up their lives amid

the flames. Then it will have the best answer to the charge of intolerance. Rome's expiatory monuments, however, have yet to be erected.

CHAPTER XII

CALVIN AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER

Misrepresentation

THE theology of Calvin, like the man himself, has suffered much from misrepresentation. Isolated statements and subordinate positions have been given a prominence which he never gave them. Many a man, if asked, What is the distinctive teaching of Calvin? would answer: The doctrine of predestination. Yet predestination occupies a comparatively small place in Calvin's teaching. Taking the English translation (by Allen) of the *Institutes*, we find that the subject of predestination occupies four chapters out of eighty, or fifty pages out of two volumes of 1200 pages, one twenty-fourth part of the whole. And its position is not one of prominence, but of subordination. It comes at the close of the third book of the *Institutes*, in which it follows his teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit, faith, repentance, the Christian

life, justification by faith, and prayer, including his beautiful exposition of the Lord's Prayer.

Nor was predestination by any means a doctrine peculiar to Calvin. It had already been taught by Augustine. Calvin acknowledges his debt to that great Father of the Church. He quotes from his treatise on the *Perseverance of the Faithful*. 'Augustine admits,' he says, 'that he was frequently blamed for preaching predestination too freely,' as a dangerous discussion to pious minds, shaking faith, and disturbing the heart; 'but he readily and amply refutes' these objections.

The
doctrine
of Predesti-
nation
not
peculiar
to Calvin

And, whether we accept the Calvinistic or Augustinian view of predestination or reject it, we have to go further back than either of these teachers for the origin of a doctrine on the subject. 'Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son,' are the words of the Apostle Paul in the 8th chapter of Romans; and in the 9th chapter of the same epistle, as well as in the 1st chapter of Ephesians, predestination is very clearly taught.

That there is a predestination, an election,

a Divine choice of man for some specific purpose, cannot be doubted. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, all these were chosen men. To His own apostles our Lord said, 'I have chosen you.'

Right and
wrong
views of
Prede-
stination
and
Election

But it is possible to believe in predestination and election, without attaching to them the sense that Calvin did. Men were chosen for special duties, for special privileges. This did not necessarily imply that they alone were chosen for salvation, to the exclusion of others. This was the mistake that the Jewish nation made, in regarding itself as the exclusive people of God. It was an error which the early Christian apostles were slow to unlearn, so that St Peter had to be taught by the vision upon the housetop that 'in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him.'

Professor Orr, of the United Free Church College at Glasgow, one of the ablest and at the same time conservative theologians of our time, has stated very correctly the modern evangelical view on the subject. Referring to Calvin's doctrine of predestination, he says: 'The conception is

that God wills, as the highest of all ends, His own glory—that is, the manifestation of His whole character, wrath as well as love; and the plan of the world is directed with infinite wisdom to the attainment of this end. . . . Now this, I think I may safely say, is not a conception in which the Christian mind can permanently rest. Our deeper penetration with Christ's doctrine of God as love, as well as the express testimony of Scripture respecting God's character and love to the world, forbid it.'

In his *Outline of Christian Theology* (T. & T. Clark, 1898) Professor William Newton Clarke thus states what he calls the Scriptural doctrine of election: 'The elect of the New Testament, like the elect of the Old, are chosen and called of God, that He may use them for the good of other men. Like Israel, the Christian people are chosen of God for the good of the world. Instead of holding that the elect are the only ones who can be saved, it is more accordant with the Scriptures to hold that the elect are elect for the sake of the non-elect—that is, they are chosen by God to serve for the saving of those who

have not yet been brought to God as they have been.'

Calvinism
and
Arminian-
ism

Thus, as it appears to us, Calvinism and Arminianism may be reconciled. They are both sides of the same truth. As Canon Liddon has said (*Passiontide Sermons*, p. 215): 'It is no doubt difficult, if not impossible, with our present limited range of knowledge, to reconcile the Divine Sovereignty in the moral world with the moral freedom of each individual man. Some of the great mistakes in Christian theology are due to an impatience of this difficulty. Calvin would sacrifice man's freedom to the Sovereignty of God; Arminius would sacrifice God's Sovereignty to the assertion of man's freedom. We cannot hope here to discover the formula which combines the two parallel lines of truth, which meet somewhere in the Infinite, beyond our point of vision; but we must hold fast to each separately, in spite of the apparent contradiction.'

There is a Divine decree. There is a predestination. There is an election. But it is an election to privilege and to service. And at the same time the free offer of the Gospel, not in any mere illusory or fictitious

sense, is to be made to all. 'All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.'

For this reason Calvin's view of reprobation, or election to damnation, is now held by very few. It was the logical outcome of his doctrine of predestination and election. To him there was not the repulsiveness in this doctrine which it presents to many to-day. Holding as he did the theory of Duns Scotus, that a thing is right by the mere fact of God willing it, he never questioned whether a course was or was not in harmony with the Divine character, if he was once convinced that it was a course attributed to God in Scripture.

The
Doctrine
of Repro-
bation

At the same time it is right to point out that here also he has been misrepresented. His famous description of reprobation, God's decree condemning the sinful, as *horribile decretum* has been quoted over and over again as if Calvin had spoken of it as a 'horrible decree.' Toplady (as quoted above) criticised John Wesley for thus quoting Calvin. 'We have annexed,' he said, 'a secondary idea to the English

'Horribile
Decretum'

words "horror" or "horrible" which the Latin *horror* and *horribilis* do not always import. . . . When Cicero says *Horribile est, causam capitis dicere; horribilius, priore loco dicere* (*Orat. pro Quinct.*), is not this the meaning? "It is an awful undertaking to plead a cause in which life and death are concerned; more awful still to be the opener of such a cause." When Virgil mentions the *horribiles iras* of Juno (*Georg.* lib. iii.), what are we to understand but the tremendous resentment of the goddess? . . . Calvin, therefore, might well term God's adorable and inscrutable purpose reflecting the fall of men *decretum horribile*; that is, not an horrible, but an awful, a tremendous, a venerable decree.'

His
preaching
more
generous
than his
theology

Calvin, too, was not always consistent with himself. His preaching was sometimes better than his theology. For example, preaching on 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4, 5, he says: 'We say what everyone sees: It is God's will that we should all be saved, when He commands that His Gospel should be preached. . . . We ought, therefore, as far as lies in our power, to seek the salvation of those who are to-day

strangers to the faith, and endeavour to bring them to the goodness of God. And why? Because Jesus Christ is not the Saviour of three or four, but offers Himself to all. . . . Jesus Christ did not come to be mediator between two or three men, but between God and men; not to reconcile a small number of people to God, but to extend His grace to the whole world.'

Closely connected with Calvin's doctrine of predestination was his denial of the freedom of the human will. Here Calvin was at one with those who differed widely from him philosophically and theologically. He stated his view not only in the passage above quoted from the *Institutes*, but also in his reply to Pighius in 1543, in which he shows that his doctrine agrees with that of Origen, Tertullian, Jerome and Augustine. But even conservative theologians like the late Dr Charles Hodge, of Princeton, who fully accepted Calvin's views of predestination, found it necessary to assert, in opposition to him, the freedom of the human will.

It must, we think, be admitted that to deny the freedom of the will is to take away human responsibility, and therefore human

guilt. There can be no right or wrong, no morality or immorality, if the will is not free. We have no right to punish the criminal for his actions, if he is not a free and therefore responsible agent. Extremes indeed meet. The late Professor Huxley, in his address at the British Association in Belfast, suggested that animals may after all be mere automata, and then quoted in his favour the theology of Calvin and Jonathan Edwards. Cotter Morison, in his *Service of Man*, denying all distinctions between morality and immorality, did so, on the ground that man is not a free agent. Such teaching is contrary to all ordinary human justice, all Christian ethics.

Modern
science
and
Calvin's
theology

The mention of Huxley's name reminds us that more than once Calvin's teaching, supposed to be out-of-date and unscientific, has received remarkable confirmation, or at any rate found remarkable parallels, in modern scientific theories. Thus the doctrine of original sin has a striking confirmation in the scientific doctrine of heredity. Evolution and natural selection lend at least probability to the doctrines of predestination and election. (*See Appendix D.*)

Of the three doctrines most criticised in connection with Calvin's teaching, one of them therefore, that of predestination, is held in modified form. Two of them, his doctrine of reprobation and denial of free-will, are held by very few. They are not the essentials of Calvinism. It was in spite of them, and not because of them, that Calvin's teaching exercised the influence which it has had upon the world.

What, then, are the leading features of Calvin's religious teaching?

We would mention, in the first place, *the sovereignty of God*. God's overruling providence was the sheet-anchor of his own faith. In his *Institutes* he devotes much space to it, dwelling upon it as the consolation of the faithful in adversity and the cure for superstitious fears. 'This knowledge will divest us of temerity and false confidence, and excite us to continual invocations of God; it will also support our minds with a good hope, that without hesitation we may securely and magnanimously despise all the dangers which surround us. Herein is discovered the inestimable felicity of the pious mind.' And then he speaks of the

Calvin's
leading
thoughts

The sove-
reignty of
God

continual dangers which threaten human life, and the misery which man must feel if he be subject to the dominion of fortune or chance. But, he adds, 'On the contrary, when this light of Divine Providence has once shined upon a pious man, he is relieved and delivered not only from the extreme anxiety and dread with which he was previously oppressed, but also from all care.'

Sometimes we are told that Calvin dwelt on the Divine Sovereignty to the exclusion of the Divine Fatherhood. But there are many passages in his writings in which the fatherhood of God is set forth. Take for instance the 20th chapter of Book III. of the *Institutes*, in which he deals with prayer. The whole chapter is an exposition of prayer, as 'the principal exercise of faith, and the medium of our daily reception of divine blessings.' Sections 35 to 47 deal with the Lord's Prayer. Treating of the words, 'Our Father who art in heaven,' he says, 'Therefore He denominates Himself our Father, and wishes us to give Him the same appellation; delivering us from all diffidence by the great sweetness of this name, since the affection of love can no-

where be found in a stronger degree than in the heart of a father' (§ 36). And again (§ 37), 'To give us the more assurance that He is our Father, if we be Christians, He will be called not only Father but "Our Father"; as though we might address Him in the following manner : O Father, whose affection towards Thy children is so strong, and whose readiness to pardon them is so great, we Thy children invoke Thee and pray to Thee, under the assurance and full persuasion that Thou hast no other than a paternal affection toward us, however unworthy we are of such a Father.'

But those who only know Calvin through the *Institutes* have a very imperfect knowledge of the scope and depth of his matured teaching. To know him in his true greatness as a religious teacher, we require to study his Commentaries.

Perhaps it is in his *Commentary on the Psalms* that he most powerfully sets forth the Divine Sovereignty, and the comfort to be derived from it. This is very noticeable in his remarks on the 46th Psalm, where he quotes the lines of Horace regarding the just man :—

‘ Si fractus illabatur orbis
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.’

His
opinion of
the Psalms

Speaking of the Psalms as a whole, he says in his Preface (we quote from Tholuck's Latin edition of 1836): ‘ I am accustomed to call this book the *ἀνατομή* of all parts of the mind, since no one will find any emotion in himself the image of which is not reflected in this mirror. Nay, the Holy Spirit has here represented to the life all the sufferings, sorrows, fears, doubts, hopes, cares, anxieties and tempestuous passions by which human minds are wont to be tossed about.’

And if we turn to his sermons, we find the same comforting lessons derived from the overruling providence of God. How beautiful, for example, are his words on the text, ‘ Underneath are the everlasting arms’ (*Opera*, vol. xxix. pp. 198, 199). ‘ If God,’ he says, ‘ has His throne in the heavens, how can He have His arms down below? It is because He fills all things; because not only is He infinite in His being, but also in His power, and He wants us to know it by experience. If it was said that the arms of God are in the heavens, that would indeed be to support the angels; but

A COMFORTING THOUGHT 187

we should not cease to tremble and to be alarmed when threatened by some evil; we should look here and there, and be distressed without remedy. But the Holy Spirit provides for such trials, and tells us that *the arms of God are underneath us here*. . . . The arms of God are all about us; we are protected by them; and this is not merely for a day; for just as God is unchangeable, just as His throne is eternal, so His arms are always here, and He will never be weary of assisting us.'

The Sovereignty of God—this was the great thought that brought comfort to the Reformers. Luther sang his hymn *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*, and cheered his own heart and the hearts of thousands since. In the struggles, persecutions, exiles, martyrdoms of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the suffering saints of God found their comfort in the assurance that 'the Lord reigneth.' And for us still, amid the perplexing problems of life, what more comforting thought? Here Calvin is at one with psalmist and with poet.

'There's a divinity doth shape our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.'

And Tennyson sings :

‘Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing
purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the pro-
cess of the suns.’

His high
ideal of
life

The second great feature in Calvin’s teaching was *his high ideal of character*. We have seen what high ideals he cherished for civic and national life. These were but the expansion and the natural consequence of his ideal of what the individual Christian character ought to be.

It is sometimes urged against those who hold Calvinistic views of predestination and election that these views tend to Antinomianism. In other words, it is said that men who regard themselves as elect tend to consider themselves safe, no matter how they live. Whatever may be the theory, or the logical consequence, in actual fact this has not been the case. The Reformers, who denied justification by works, were the most zealous in insisting upon good works as the fruit and evidence of faith. The Calvinist who emphasised election, emphasised also the

fact that it was an election unto holiness (see Ephes. i. 4).

Thus, in the 6th, 7th, and 8th chapters of Book III. of the *Institutes* Calvin treats of the Christian life, and particularly of self-denial and bearing the cross. There ought, he says, to be a symmetry and agreement between the righteousness of God and the obedience of the faithful. The Scripture plan is first, that a love of righteousness be instilled and introduced into our hearts, and secondly, that a rule be prescribed to us, to prevent our taking any devious steps in the race of righteousness. Christ is proposed to us as an example, whose character we should exhibit in our lives. What, he asks, can be more efficacious than this one consideration?

Then, speaking of the knowledge of Christ, he says: 'It is a doctrine not of the tongue, but of the life; and is not apprehended merely with the understanding and memory, like other sciences, but is then only received when it possesses the whole soul, and finds a seat and residence in the inmost affection of the heart.'

The Christian will live in a constant sense of God's presence. 'Indeed, a Christian man ought to be so composed and prepared, as to reflect that he has to do with God every moment of his life. Thus, as he will measure all his actions by his will and determination, so he will refer the whole bias of his mind religiously to Him.'

He will show kindness to others. 'The Lord commands us to do good unto all men' universally, a great part of whom, estimated according to their own merits, are very undeserving; but here the Scripture assists us with an excellent rule, when it inculcates that we must not regard the intrinsic merit of men, but must consider the image of God in them, to which we owe all possible honour and love: but that this image is most carefully to be observed in them 'who are of the household of faith,' inasmuch as it is renewed and restored by the Spirit of Christ.' And then he pleads for kindness even to complete strangers, and for forgiveness of injuries. 'We should remember that we must not reflect on the wickedness of men, but contemplate the divine image in

them; which, concealing and obliterating their faults, by its beauty and dignity allures us to embrace them in the arms of our love.'

Calvin's sermons, as might be expected, are full of ethical teaching. He brings the Gospel to bear upon business and social relationships in the most thorough fashion. He pleads for simplicity of living, simplicity of dress and surroundings. And yet he guards against asceticism or undue severity. He quotes, for instance, the 104th Psalm, in which it is said 'that God has not only given men bread and water for the necessities of life, but that He has added wine as well, for their comfort and enjoyment.' (*Opera*, xxviii. pp. 29-37.)

Nor does he ignore the brotherhood of man. Thus in one sermon (*Opera*, liii. p. 474) he says: 'We know that we are created in the image of God, that we are all of one flesh, I mean the whole human race.' Again (*Opera*, xxviii. pp. 9-16): 'Even with regard to people who are unknown to you, God says that you should take pains to preserve their rights and their property.' And he quotes the 23rd chapter of Exodus to show

His
ethical
teaching

that even our enemy is there called our 'brother.' 'All people that are in the world,' he adds, 'are your neighbours.'

We might say then that the two great lessons of Calvin's teaching are God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. Both have an elevating and inspiring influence upon mind and character. The American orator and statesman, Daniel Webster, was once asked by one who sat next him at dinner what was the most important thought that ever occupied his mind. After a moment or two of reflection, he answered, 'The most important thought that ever occupied my mind was that of my personal responsibility to God.' Or, as Browning, has it :—

'Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand fast.'

It is this that explains the great moral power which Calvin's teaching has exercised. To quote again from Professor Williston Walker : 'A personal relation of each man to God, a definite divine plan for each life, a value for the humblest individual in the God-appointed ordering of the universe, are thoughts which, however justly the

social rather than the individual aspects of Christianity are now being emphasised, have demonstrated their worth in Christian history. Yet perhaps the crowning historic significance of Calvinism is to be seen in its valuation of character. Its conception of the duty to know and to do the will of God, not indeed as a means of salvation, but as that for which we are elected to life, and as the only fitting tribute to the "honour of God" which we are bound to maintain, has made of the Calvinist always a representative of a strenuous morality.'

Mr J. A. Froude, in his Rectorial Address at St Andrews in 1871, bore a similar testimony. 'I shall ask you,' he said, 'why, if it be a creed of intellectual servitude, it was able to inspire and sustain the bravest efforts ever made by man to break the yoke of unjust authority? When all else has failed—when patriotism has covered its face and human courage has broken down—when intellect has yielded, as Gibbon says, "with a smile or a sigh," content to philosophise in the closet, and abroad worship with the vulgar—when emotion and sentiment and tender imaginative piety

Froude's
testimony

have become the handmaids of superstition, and have dreamt themselves into forgetfulness that there is any difference between lies and truth—the slavish form of belief called Calvinism, in one or other of its many forms, has borne ever an inflexible front to illusion and mendacity, and has preferred rather to be ground to powder like flint than to bend before violence or melt under enervating temptation.’

Lord
Morley on
Calvinism

One of the most remarkable as well as most recent tributes to Calvin’s moral power is that of Lord Morley in his *Oliver Cromwell*. He says :—

‘Nothing less than to create in man a new nature was his (Calvin’s) far-reaching aim, to regenerate character, to simplify and consolidate religious faith. Men take a narrow view of Calvin, when they think of him only as the preacher of justification by faith, and the foe of sacerdotal mediation. His scheme comprehended a doctrine that went to the very root of man’s relation with the scheme of universal things: a Church order as closely compacted as that of Rome; a system of moral discipline as concise and as imperative as the Code of Napoleon. He built upon it a certain

theory of the universe which by his agency has exerted an amazing influence upon the world. It is a theory that might have been expected to sink men crouching and paralysed into the blackest abysses of despair, and it has in fact been answerable for much anguish in many a human heart. Still, Calvinism has proved itself a famous soil for rearing heroic natures. . . .

‘Calvinism exalted its votaries to a pitch of heroic moral energy that has never been surpassed; and men who were bound to suppose themselves moving in chains inexorably riveted, along a track ordained by a despotic and unseen Will before time began, have yet exhibited an active courage, a resolute endurance, a cheerful self-restraint, an exulting self-sacrifice, that men count among the highest glories of the human conscience. . . .

‘Is it, in other words, character that fixes creed, or creed that fashions character? Or is there a bracing and an exalting effect in the unrewarded morality of Calvinism; in the doctrine that good works done in view of future recompense have no merit; in that obedience to duty for its own sake,

which in Calvin, as in Kant, has been called one of the noblest efforts of human conscience towards pure virtue? Or, again, is there something invigorating and inspiring in the thought of acting in harmony with eternal law, however grim; of being no mere link in a chain of mechanical causation, but a chosen instrument in executing the sublime decrees of invincible power and infinite intelligence?'

Away in the background of Geneva lies Mont Blanc, its snowy summit glittering in the sunshine. The deep calm blue waters of Lake Lemman lie close to the town. From Mont Blanc, white and cold, but sunny, flow the waters of the Arve. From Lake Lemman, blue as the lake itself, purified by their passage through it, flow the waters of the Rhone. A little below Geneva the two rivers meet, the white, or gray, and blue keeping for a good way distinctly separate, as they flow on side by side. But soon they blend, and make their onward way through mountain gorges, to fertilize and beautify the sunny plains of Southern France. So the teaching of Calvin, a little cold perhaps and severe in

itself, has blended with a warm spiritual fervour, and has brought life and power to the Churches, while to the nations that have been influenced by it, it has brought the priceless boon of civil and religious liberty.

APPENDIX A

CALVIN AND AMUSEMENTS

(Page 137)

PROFESSOR KUYPER of Leyden says :—

‘Card-playing has been placed under a ban by Calvinism, not as though games of all kinds were forbidden, nor as though something demoniacal lurked in the cards themselves, but because it fosters in our hearts the dangerous tendency to look away from God, and to put our trust in *Fortune* or *Luck*. A game which is decided by keenness of vision, quickness of action, and range of experience, is ennobling in its character, but a game like cards, which is chiefly decided by the way in which the cards are arranged in the pack, and blindly distributed, induces us to attach a certain significance to that fatal imaginative power, outside of God, called *Chance* or *Fortune*. To this kind of unbelief, every one of us is inclined. The fever of stock-gambling shows daily how much more strongly people are attracted and influenced by the nod of Fortune than by solid application to their work. Therefore the Calvinist judged that the rising generation ought to be guarded against this dangerous tendency, because by means of card-playing it would be fostered.’—*Calvinism*, Princeton Lectures, 1898, p. 93.

APPENDIX B

CALVINISM IN GERMANY

(Page 155)

THERE are still important centres of German life where the Calvinistic principles are strongly held. There is, for example, Western Friesland, including the city of Emden, where the Walloons took refuge when they were driven from England in the time of Queen Mary.

There is also the Wupperthal with its great manufacturing cities of Barmen and Elberfeld, the former being the headquarters of the Rhenish Missionary Society. Both cities are marked by a strong spiritual life as well as by philanthropy of a very thorough and practical kind.

And then there are the two principalities of Schaumburg-Lippe and Lippe-Detmold. In Detmold, the capital of the latter principality, a lecture was delivered on Calvin in December 1908, by M. Charles Correvon, Pastor of the French Church of Frankfort. The Reformed Church of Detmold, in which the meeting was held, is described as a marvel of Gothic architecture. It was filled to overflowing on the occasion. Amongst those present were the Prince of Lippe and his suite. Such is the honour in which Calvin is held in one of the most virile centres of modern German life.

APPENDIX C

CALVIN'S INFLUENCE ON HISTORY

(Page 158)

PROFESSOR KUYPER thus writes :—

‘Just ask yourselves, What would have become of Europe and America, if in the 16th century the star of Calvinism had not suddenly risen on the horizon of Western Europe? In that case Spain would have crushed the Netherlands. In England and Scotland the Stuarts would have carried out their fatal plans. In Switzerland the spirit of half-heartedness would have gained the day. . . . The whole American continent would have remained subject to Spain. . . . If the power of Spain had not been broken by the heroism of the Calvinistic spirit, the history of the Netherlands, of Europe, and of the world would have been as painfully sad and dark as now, thanks to Calvinism, it is bright and inspiring.’—*Calvinism*, Princeton Lectures, 1898, pp. 43, 44.

APPENDIX D

ELECTION AND SELECTION

(Page 182)

PROFESSOR KUYPER says :—

‘Our generation turns a deaf ear to *Election*, but grows madly enthusiastic over *Selection*.’—*Calvinism*, p. 269.

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